Labour Monthly

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

ZERO HOUR —SECOND FRONT

BY IVOR MONTAGU

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The Crisis of the War
by R.P.D.

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BEN BRADLEY and
J.K.

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LABOUR MONTHLY DEVELOPMENT FUND

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FOUR DATES

Four vital dates in the history of Anglo-Soviet relations made such a deep impression on one of our readers that he sent us £5 for each of them. They are: July 12, 1941, Anglo-Soviet Pact; May 24, 1942, monster rally in Trafalgar Square after the Communist Party Conference; May 26, 1942, signing of Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance; June 20, 1942, spectacular pageant at the Empress Stadium in honour of Anglo-Soviet Unity. Foremost in that superb display were the magnificent performances by all branches of the fighting forces; and foremost, too, among this month's donations, Lance-Jack R.C.O.S., sending us fifty bob, explains: "Don't appeal so wistfully next month or I'm liable to sell some of my kit!" Well, this month at least that won't be necessary, but we must find some way of "going straight to the credits" of all our readers. The R.A.M.C. bloke sends: "No flowery compliments" (but we are vain enough to like them) and a purple Peppiatt (they used to be brown Bradburys); and the R.A. maintains its high reputation. Competition is invited by Peter Craig—"your youngest member, aged 4½ months." We are deeply moved by a collection "in memory of a comrade who died fighting in Spain for those ideals and principles of which your journal is such a consistent exponent."

Finest of all, is the positive, confident note struck by so many of our generous readers: the note of Victory: Victory this year, but for victory action now; action to match the slogan "All for the Front!"

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Wm. Grass			
Pinner D.G.			0
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Anon.		10	0
Four Dates	20	0	0
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H. Ibbetson	5	0	0
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For Mark Gima	3	15	0
A Farmworker		3	0
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Y. Thomasson		3	6
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E. Pullen		5	0
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A.R.M.		5	0
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Norah Kelly		6	0
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Pat Sloan	14	13	0
F. Overington		2	6
F. Chapman		1	6
E.P.	5	0	0
B. M. Singh		6	0
Red Don	1	0	0
Dawley Bank D.G.		10	0
Sergeant, R.A.O.C.	1	0	0
R.F.		1	6
F.L.		5	0
R.A.F. Redwings	1	0	0
Chas. Green		10	0
Nelson, Cambridge	1	0	0
H.S.M.		3	8
H. V. Carver	1	5	0
M. Christopher		2	6
C. Ibbetson			0
F. G. Waller			3
C. Bragg, Jnr.	1	1	
Beckenham D.G.		10	
J. A. Jackson	1	1	0
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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Crisis of the War—Price of Delay—Collapse of "Waiting" Strategies—Speed the Second Front—Lessons of Libya—Why the Initiative Passed to the Axis—No Time to Lose—Fulfil the Second Front Agreement—Rouse the Nation—Unified Strategy—Military Lessons—No Toleration for Sabotage—Shipping and Shipbuilding—India and the Second Front—Political Mobilisation—Unity of the Labour Movement—Peril and Opportunity.

WE have entered the most urgent phase of the battles of 1942. The Nazi advance in the Don region, Rommel's thrust against Egypt, the intensified attack on Allied shipping, the diplomatic pressure on France, Spain and Turkey, and the preparations of Japan's next move after the landing on the Aleutian Islands, have launched the opening of the main Axis offensive in the first days of July. German Fascism is throwing all its reserves of man-power and of mechanised material into action in order to deliver its supreme thrust with its entire forces on the decisive Eastern Front, before the Second Front is established in the West, before the main Anglo-American forces are engaged in the field. The lesson is plain and unmistakable and admits of no delay. The battles which are now opening are likely to prove the decisive battles of the war. Once again the war is opening out into a war of movement. If the initiative is left in Axis hands, the tempo of events can lead to menacing developments. All the combined strength of all the Powers opposed to the Axis need to be thrown into the field without limit in order to smash this offensive and wrest the initiative from Axis hands. This can be done, but by common consent there is only one means to do it, and that is the immediate opening of the Western European Front, at whatever cost, which can radically transform the balance of forces, cut the ground from under the feet of the Nazi offensive, release the main Soviet offensive, and thus wrest rapid victory from the present ordeals and perils. The speediest establishment of the Second Front in the West is now the life-and-death issue for the anti-Axis coalition.

NOTHING is to be gained by minimising the gravity of the present situation. We are paying dearly for the delay of the Second Front in the West. Why has the initiative once again passed into Axis hands? It is no longer a question of superiority of Axis resources in man-power and material over the anti-Axis coalition as a whole. Every official statement of every British and American authority has now for several months since the spring of this year emphasised the overwhelming superiority of anti-Axis production over Axis production. But that superiority is only effective if it is used. The Nazi Command can still establish local superiority if it is left free to concentrate nine-tenths of its forces on the single Eastern European Front, with the bulk of the remaining tenth (for France is now reported to be denuded of all save 100,000 inferior reserve troops, and only one out of the former eight divisions is left in Jugoslavia) concen-

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trated on the extension of the Eastern Front in Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean, where only a fraction of the colossal Anglo-American forces and material accumulated there can operate in action, and where in consequence a great part of them are in danger of becoming, in the event of any reverse, as at Tobruk, spoils for the enemy to reinforce his supplies. In the moment of decisive battles, when the enemy is throwing all his forces into the field, unused forces and resources on our side are a gift to the enemy.

THE policy of supposed "safety first," of delay of the Second Front, on the grounds of risk, on the grounds of the necessity of lengthy and elaborate preliminary preparations to ensure success; the policy of concentration of priority of supplies to the Middle East and the Nile Valley for a defensive strategy, and of a secondary channel of supplies to the Soviet Union, while postponing during these crucial months any Second Front in the West; this policy has once again been proved to be, equally by the events in Libya and by the events on the Soviet front, not the path of safety, but the path of danger, leading to military reverses which can turn the whole balance against us, even while the prolonged preparations for the future Second Front are going forward.

ALL the controversies and nagging criticisms, following on the events in Libya and the military reverses, which have been raised by interested critics chiefly from among the sections of Conservatives hostile to the Prime Minister, unfriendly to the Soviet alliance and enemies of the Second Front, who have sought to exploit the military reverses for political purposes, to weaken the position of the Prime Minister, to cover up the mistakes of the generals and High Command, to hint that supplies to the Soviet Union were impairing the defences of the Empire, to throw doubt on the character of British weapons and supplies, to spread distrust and defeatism and lack of confidence, and thus to sabotage and prevent the Second Front: all these controversies and criticisms have consistently ignored the central issue and lesson, equally of the events in Libya and of the events on the Soviet front—namely, the vital necessity of the Second Front in the West. Yet this issue stands out a mile, overshadowing every other undoubtedly important lesson in respect of military tactics and the character of weapons.

THE facts are inescapable. The statistics of the priority of supplies to the Middle East, to which we have repeatedly called attention in this journal as the key to the previous governing strategy of the past twelve months, have now been officially given, thus finally killing the myth that the main supplies were going to the Soviet Union at the expense of the Empire.

> Extreme exertions have been made by the Home Government during the last two years to strengthen and maintain the Armies in the Middle East. During that time, apart altogether from reinforcements to other theatres, there have gone to the Middle East from this country, from the Empire overseas, and to a lesser extent from the United States, more than 950,000 men, 4,500 tanks, 6,000 aircraft, nearly 5,000 piece of artillery, 50,000 machine-guns and over 100,000 mechanical vehicles.
>
> (Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons, July 2, 1942.)

While 4,500 tanks were sent to the Nile Valley, 2,000 tanks were sent to the Soviet Union.

> In Russia the Valentine is highly rated. Has the House any idea of the number of tanks we have sent to Russia? As I said, we have sent 4,500 altogether to the Nile Valley. We have sent over 2,000 tanks to Russia, and the Russians are using them against the German armour with vigour and effect.

The last statement with regard to the 2,000 tanks, that "the Russians are using them against the German armour with vigour and effect," is especially important to note.

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WHAT is the strategical conclusion to be drawn from these facts? The central strategical issue arising from this report is whether this disposition has represented the most effective utilisation of these colossal forces against the enemy for the aim of victory. With regard to the 2,000 tanks sent to the Soviet Union there is no doubt of the answer; these have all been in action against the German enemy "with vigour and effect"—thus incidentally demonstrating that, whatever room for criticism there may be of the construction, armour and gun-equipment of these tanks, the main weakness in Libya arose, not from these faults, but from the tactical handling of them by those in command, and that in consequence the reactionary Conservative critics of the Prime Minister, in their zeal to defend incompetence among their friends in the High Command and transfer the blame to the Prime Minister, were seeking to cover up failings of the generals by turning the attack on to the weapons on the familiar principle that "a bad workman quarrels with his tools." In this connection it is worth noting that the Minister of Production, Mr. Lyttelton, from within the Cabinet by the character of his speech, assisted this attack.

BUT while the 2,000 tanks sent to the Soviet Union have thus all been fully used in action against the enemy, can the same be said of the 4,500 tanks sent to the Nile Valley? How far have these been in action against the enemy to a corresponding degree during these crucial battles of the war? It is important to bear in mind that it takes twenty-six times the shipping to dispatch and maintain the same amount of forces and equipment to the Middle East as to any part of Western Europe within three days' steaming. 950,000 men had been dispatched to the Middle East. In the decisive battle in Libya in May, 100,000 men were engaged: "the armies drew up in the desert in the middle of May about 100,000 a side: we had 100,000 men, and the enemy 90,000." In the decisive tank battle on June 13, which marked the turning-point, 300 tanks were engaged: "On the 13th there came a change; on that morning we had about 300 tanks in action, and by nightfall no more than 70 remained." The conditions of desert warfare could not permit of more than a very limited fraction of the colossal forces sent being engaged at any one time with the enemy.

IS it not clear that the use of a decisive proportion of the forces thus left unused and inactive, together with forces from Britain, for the establishment and maintenance of a Western Front in Europe (with much less strain on shipping) would have not only brought a far greater proportion of the total Allied forces into action against the enemy, exercised a preponderant influence on the decisive theatres of war in Europe and especially on the Soviet front, and thus changed the whole course of the war, but would have equally and in consequence transformed the situation in Libya and in Egypt? If it is argued that it was necessary to hold these forces inactive in readiness for a future Nazi advance through the regions of the Middle East, it is evident that this is equivalent to a continuance of the old fatal defensive strategy which disperses and immobilises forces at every point in the globe in preparation for a possible enemy attack, with the result that the initiative is left to the enemy to choose the field of conflict, so that, despite the aggregate superiority of anti-Axis forces, this aggregate superiority dissolves into local inferiority wherever the enemy chooses to attack. On the contrary, had the Western Front been already established in Europe, there would have been no reinforcements and supplies for Rommel to make his offensive, so that the strategy of the Second Front represents,

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not only the key strategy for the speediest decisive victory over Hitler and ending of the war, but also the best immediate defence for Libya, Egypt and every secondary theatre of war or field of potential Nazi attack. This is the essence of the case for the Second Front, which is now officially recognised.

THE urgent lessons of this situation need now to be acted on with all the greater promptitude and vigour, since their neglect has led to the present dangerous crisis. In this eighth month of the crucial year, 1942, with nearly two-thirds of the year past, we need firmly to take stock of the actual position in order to draw the practical conclusions for action. The initial Soviet offensive of May crumpled up the plans of Hitler's spring offensive, and placed the ball at our feet. A combined offensive of the Allies at this point, dividing Hitler's forces, and thus releasing the main Soviet general offensive, could have led to rapid and final victory. What went wrong? The answer is plain. The absence of the Second Front in the West prevented the Soviet offensive from developing into the general offensive. Molotov's flight to London and Washington followed at the end of May to reach the agreement on the Second Front in Western Europe in 1942. The cardinal principle of Allied strategy for victory was plainly proclaimed. It was reaffirmed in the Churchill-Roosevelt communique from Washington in June :—

> The object in view is the earliest maximum concentration of allied war power upon the enemy.

The fulfilment of this in action is now the urgent centrepoint of the situation.

THE interdependence of the Soviet offensive and the Anglo-American front in the West is the key to victory over Hitler.

> The Russians are biding their time and will attack the Germans when a Second Front is opened in the West.
>
> (*Reuter* dispatch from Moscow, July 4.)

> Sholokov does not under-estimate the strength of the German war machine. When I asked him whether the people of the Don and Kuban country were confident that the Germans would not break through, he answered: "That depends on many things, and, above all, on what happens in Western Europe."
>
> It is undeniable that there is great impatience here about a Second Front.
>
> (A. Werth in *Sunday Times*, June 28.)

The delay of combined action gave back the initiative to the Axis. Hitler used the opportunity thus given him to make his co-ordinated thrust to the East, on the Don basin, and against Egypt, with a view to drive towards the rich territories of South-East Russia and the Middle East, to drive towards the rich territories thus opened, to deprive the Soviet Union of vital industrial regions and sources of food supply, prepare in this way the renewed attack on Moscow, and, in the event of favourable conditions, press forward to the Middle East, to gain a new lease of life, new resources and new hopes of victory. Therefore, at the moment when the attack of the rising strength of the Allies should be delivering its main blow against Hitler, we are now confronted with the most serious crisis of the war. This situation can still be rapidly reversed, but only by the most prompt and decisive action for the speediest establishment of the Second Front in the West.

WHEN Molotov flew to London and Washington at the end of May, it was not only in order to establish the long-term basis of future co-operation of Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States. It was, above all, to establish the immediate practical objective o the Second Front in the West in 1942 The Second Front Agreement of May 26 alongside the Anglo-Soviet Alliance an the American-Soviet agreements, constitutes a landmark of the strategy of th war. The objective of the Anglo American Front in Western Europe 1942 is the basis and cornerstone of th strategy of the United Nations. But th

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battle for the Second Front is not thereby over; the real tasks begin from this Agreement. The question of *speed* is still decisive. It is still necessary to surmount a host of practical difficulties and tasks, to rouse the entire people for the fulfilment of the objective, to overcome passivity, routinism and hesitancy which retards fulfilment, as well as to defeat and rout the opposition and sabotage of the open enemies of the Second Front. All this requires a campaign still more intensive and urgent than that which preceded the Second Front Agreement.

THE first necessity is to rouse the whole nation to the plain understanding of the present situation, the urgency of the position and the tasks which fall to us. It is time to awaken once and for all from the fool's paradise of empty optimistic chatter, boasts of the mounting strength of the Allies in 1943, promises and promises and promises of ction without action, placid elaboration f grandiose schemes of reconstruction of n imaginary post-war world, which have een made a substitute for action during ese past months. *The crisis of the war is re.* The war can be won or lost in these ming weeks. If the present Axis thrust allowed to win through, all the card-tle visions of 1943 come toppling vn; the possibilities of speedy victory place to a vista of the most prolonged, ly and destructive war in human his-for every country and people in the d. The elementary truth which we sought to hammer home continu-from the first sentence of the first of this journal in the present year, 1942 is the decisive year, is now inescapable and universally recog-The supreme test of action is here, ch every man, every gun, every id every machine must exert full against the enemy. Not future in-, but present action is what alone nts.

SECOND, the entire strategy of the Alliance needs to be wholeheartedly, completely, without reservations imbued with the aim of the combined offensive for victory in 1942—the aim of striking now with the entire power of every country in the Alliance, without stint, without thought of cost or sacrifice, without limit, as the sole means of shattering the present Axis offensive and replacing it by our offensive and victory There is no room for half-hearted action, for incompletely fused strategy, for conflicting schools of thought and plans and dispersal of effort. The most serious statement in Mr. Churchill's speech on July 2 was not on any issue raised by his Conservative critics, but was that in which he said that "I have never shared the view that this would be a short war, or that it would end in 1942; it is far more likely to be a long war." The contradiction here given public expression in relation to the declared aim of the Soviet leaders of all-out effort for victory in 1942 is no mere question of alternative conceptions and hypotheses of future possibilities; for the conception can govern the action, and consequently the outcome; there are no automatic victories. This contradiction reveals that, despite the great advance represented by the agreement for common action, there is not yet complete fusion of strategy in the basic outlook; and this weakness needs to be rapidly overcome. The single strategic plan is the indispensable basis for the victory of the Alliance.

THIRD, the military lessons of the events in Libya, both in respect of the personnel of the High Command, tactics, methods of training, the use of weapons and air-arm co-operation, need to be drawn and acted on unsparingly, ruthlessly, without consideration of personalities, prestige, privileged interests or entrenched routine. The question here is no question of parliamentary votes of censure, judicial inquests and trib

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roving commissions of inquiry, or similar political manoeuvres directed in fact to cover up responsibilities and divert attention into other directions for dubious political aims. The question is a severely practical one for the Government to take such measures for action, on the basis of the lessons of Libya, as are essential for the successful fulfilment of the Second Front, and as will ensure that no incompetence in high places, hesitancy, resistance to necessary innovation, or secret reactionary or pro-Fascist sympathies (such as were allowed to control and destroy the army in France) be allowed for one day to continue in any position, high or low, and jeopardise the effective fulfilment of the Second Front. The morale and confidence of the army in its commanders and in the governing military methods, indispensable for such a formidable enterprise as the Second Front, peremptorily demands such a ruthless purge and renovation.

FOURTH, the pro-Fascist, defeatist and sabotaging forces in political life, in civilian controlling positions and in the economic controls need to be no less vigorously dealt with and removed from the possibility of doing further harm. This is equally indispensable for the effective and speedy establishment of the Second Front, in order that the administration shall not be hamstrung and shall be controlled at every point by energetic personalities believing in a positive offensive policy and capable of overcoming the practical difficulties, and for the protection of the rear and maintenance of supplies once the Second Front is established. Failure to deal with these forces will cost dear, and is already costing dear. Herein lies the tap-root of the influences and factors retarding the Second Front. The main weakness of the Government is the failure to deal effectively with these forces and the conciliatory attitude adopted towards them. The attitude of toleration to the intrigues and manoeuvres of these elements must be ended. A serious war against Fascism must be also war against the friends of Fascism in this country.

FIFTH, the urgent practical tasks in respect of shipping, shipbuilding, coal, transport, the whole field of arms production and the organisation of man-power and woman-power need to be brought into the forefront of public attention and tackled in a far more drastic and downright fashion than has yet been attempted, owing to tenderness for vested interests or fears of alarming public opinion or fears of sectional opposition. Every experience of the war has shown that the people are ready to respond to strong and confident leadership; morale is injured only by half-heartedness, passivity, confusion, divided counsels or tolerance of obstructive private interests.

HERE also it is necessary to warn against political manoeuvres of enemies of the Second Front. The same reactionary interests, which sought to exploit the military reverses in Libya in order to sow distrust of British arms and spread the myth of Nazi invincibility and the impossibility of meeting the Germans in the field until after years of construction of new weapons, and thus spread defeatism and prevent the Second Front, now seek to exploit the serious shipping situation for the same aim. They harass the Government for the publication of shipping figures and information which it must be entirely a matter for the judgment of the Government to give or withhold, and seek to spread alarm and defeatism on the shipping situation, not in order to overcome the difficulties and show the practical path forward to the Second Front, but in order to prove the impossibility of the Second Front. The shipping situation is serious enough; but the positive path of approach must be to tackle it entirely on the basis of the abso-

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lute necessity of establishing the Second Front: that is, review of the present utilisation of shipping space and priorities, and maximum economy by drastic restriction of imports (in this connection special importance attaches to the programme on food and agriculture just published by the Communist Party and reviewed elsewhere in this number); and measures, not yet adopted, for the intensification of shipbuilding on the lines put forward by the National Shipbuilding Shop Stewards Committee as well as by the technicians in the industry. The opposition of the private shipowning interests, concerned for their post-war position, must not be allowed to stand in the way.

SIXTH, the running sore of the situation in India must be tackled, not only for the urgent needs of the war against the Axis in Asia, but in order, by mobilising additional forces there, to release additional forces for the Second Front. The political deterioration which has followed the fiasco of the Cripps Mission, consequent on the refusal to meet the moderate and justified claims of the Congress for a National Government as the basis for the most effective co-operation with the United Nations, has since moved fast and is now reaching a dangerous point with the new Congress resolution and conditional ultimatum for a non-co-operation policy. Three months of confusion and disorganisation have been followed by the renewed handing over of the leadership of the Congress to Gandhi along lines of policy which, if carried out, would place the Indian national movement, as represented by Congress, in opposition to the current of the struggle of the peoples all over the world and would do deep harm to the interests of Indian freedom. But the Congress resolution reveals at the same time the desperate appeal of those elements within the Congress which are striving for a settlement on the basis of co-operation with the United Nations. It becomes the more necessary to press forward the campaign here for the reopening of negotiations in order to reach a settlement on the basis of the recognition of a representative Indian National Government which would mobilise the Indian people for the common struggle, so that India should become a source of strength in place of a source of weakness.

SEVENTH, and most important, is the question of political mobilisation in this country for the effective fulfilment of the Second Front. Herein lies the key problem. The Second Front is not only a strategic, but also a political question. The major difficulties are not the technical difficulties, serious as these are. The technical difficulties can be surmounted, provided there is the united will and determination. The major difficulties lie in the political situation. The fulfilment of the policy of the Second Front requires the overcoming of a host of powerful forces of opposition, forces which have always violently opposed it, just as they previously opposed the common Anglo-French-Soviet Front against Fascist aggression and preferred the Munich path of conciliation to Fascism, and which now in some cases still openly oppose it, in other cases, under cover of acceptance, continue their opposition in more subtle forms. Only a vigorous, conscious, vigilant and united popular movement can defeat these forces. But this requires the political leadership and driving energy of a united Labour movement. Herein lies the main weakness of the political situation, that alongside the unchecked intrigues and manoeuvres of the pro-Fascists, there is still lack of effective rôle of the Labour movement, the lack of a united Labour movement.

THE present urgent situation should call forth the united response and activity of the entire organised Labour movement to play the foremost rôle in the fight for the speediest estab-

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lishment of the Second Front, to defeat the enemies of the Second Front and pro-Fascist intriguers, to unite the nation behind the policy of action and to strengthen the Government upon this basis. It is necessary to end with the abnegation of political responsibility of the Labour movement, the ignoring of the practical problems of the war and relapse to preoccupation only with schemes of post-war reconstruction or with special questions on the social and economic front, or playing up of sectional demands without regard to the war situation. It is necessary to end with a position in which reactionary elements on the right from the leading sections of the Labour movement continue to spread propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union and to the Second Front, while other elements on the left, impatient of the shortcomings of the Government's policy, join up with the Munichites against the Government. The present hour is too grave for the old divisions or the old petty sectional considerations to be allowed to stand in the way of the urgent needs which must be recognised by all serious Socialists and anti-Fascists. The united co-operation of all sections of the Labour movement on the basis of a common programme should be able to change the entire political situation and ensure the speediest fulfilment of that crucial rôle of Britain in the World Front which is indispensable for victory.

DECISIVE days are now before us. The speed of events may bring many further changes and developments before these lines appear. The present emergency must be met by a united mobilisation of the entire people and by the most energetic measures on the part of the Government. The part that we now play will determine the entire future. The path of the Second Front is the only path to the realisation of our aims. Every obstacle that stands in the way of this path must be overcome. We must make the present hour of danger, when the supreme onslaught of the enemy is being let loose, the hour of opportunity to hasten by our common action the defeat of this onslaught and thus open the way to the final defeat of Fascism.

R. P. D.

July 15, 1942.

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Zero Hour — Second Front

by IVOR MONTAGU

"In the course of the conversations complete agreement was reached with regard to the urgent tasks of the creation of a Second Front in Europe in 1942."

(Official announcement following the negotiations between the Governments of Great Britain, the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., June 11.)

COMPLETE agreement. We know that the Soviet Government believes that the Second Front will lead to victory and shorten the war. This announcement means that the urgent opening of the Second Front is now the proclaimed policy also of the British and United States Governments.

Not only of these. Sikorski, speaking for the Polish Government; Premier Nygaardsvold, for the Norwegian; Bernhard, for the Dutch; de Gaulle, for Free France; General Marshall for the U.S. Forces; General McNaughton for the Canadian; countless statements of the kind have shown this a unanimous Allied purpose and understanding.

On what is this understanding based? Is the Second Front in 1942 a scheme to "help" Russia? A scheme to sacrifice our own blood in gratitude to "help" our Russian Allies so heroically pouring out their own? An act of ethics or unselfishness, where heart might be misleading head?

Not at all, the Second Front in 1942 has been adopted as its policy by the British Government because the cold, sober facts of the situation show that upon the opening depends not merely the shortening of the war, but the whole issue of victory or enslavement to Nazi corruption for our own country and the whole world.

As Alvarez del Vayo, Foreign Minister of Republican Spain, put it on April 25 —

> Can anybody seriously think that a British American Expeditionary Force, disembarking in 1943 or 1944 at the best imaginable point in Europe, could accomplish the job of an Army trained in a life-and-death struggle with the Nazis, operating from its own soil and with the whole nation behind it? Once the Russian Army is destroyed there will be no serious chance of opening a Second Front in Europe. On the other hand, with the Russian Army at full strength and with the United Nations throwing their entire weight into the battle, there is a chance, not only of stopping the Axis drive, but of breaking Hitler sooner than many people think possible.

The fact is so obvious that the Anglo-American statesmen have given up speaking of plans for 1943, Time is *not* on our side. Time is itself the key-subject of the struggle. Hitler must act fast enough to win decision before his opponents' resources are brought to bear. The Allies must act faster still, to forestall his decision.

It is imperative that every person in this country *understands* (not accepts, as a mere act of faith or loyalty) why the Second Front in 1942 is, in the phrase of the British, Soviet, and United States Governments' declaration, "urgent," why it is indispensable.

Military Reasons. Why the Allied blows must be delivered in 1942.

It has been the fashion to speak of Victory as certain because the resources of the Allies were the greater, populations far vaster. Halifax, for example, in May 1941 proclaimed as "the main assurance of the ultimate collapse and defeat of Hitler" "the fact that the British Empire and U.S.A. held 91 per cent. of the world's rubber, 70 per cent. of oil and 85 per cent. of its coffee."* The point is, these resources and populations are not mobilised. Axis policy is to seize the resources for their own exploitation before the Allies mobilises them. Already, for example, Japan has seized territories providing 89 per cent. of the world's rubber, leaving the Allies a doubtful 11 per cent.

It has been the fashion to speak of the Allied resources in man-power as 1,500 millions, compared to 650 millions controlled by the Axis. But 900 millions of the Allied man-power are undeveloped, unarmed, unmobilised. Of all India's 400 millions, only 50,000 are engaged in ordnance factories. China's 400 millions are mostly unarmed or poorly armed. As Chiang Kai-Shek said recently "[illegible]

Britain in the World Front, by R. P. Dutt.

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cent. of our strength is unused; and even in Britain and the United States they are still far from having organised their full strength."

The home populations of Germany, Italy and Japan are 230 millions. The populations of Britain, U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and the British White Dominions total 393 millions. Add to the Axis populations the subjugated European countries, together with the nominally independent but in fact economically subjected Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal, and the Axis total becomes 430 millions. Take into consideration the technical development of the two camps (1939 figures: 9.8 million workers in key industries—metal, engineering, chemical, precision instrument manufacture—in Nazi over-run Europe and Japan; 11.1 million in the British Empire, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.) also the relative intensity of mobilisation for military service and war industry.

These figures provide us with the *real* picture of the present war position, the real key to Hitler's strategy of 1942.

The Axis objective for 1942 is: so to utilise the present period wherein the comparative balance of *mobilised, active* resources is in the Axis favour, as to ensure that the unmobilised resources of the Allies, which could redress that balance, come into operation only after they have fallen into Axis control. *The achievement of this purpose would give the Axis a real perspective of victory.* The method: territorial gain, to acquire these resources; crushing of Allied armies, to intimidate and bring over to complete collaboration neutrals in possession of resources now in economic collaboration with the Allies; severing of communications, to make resources too far distant for actual Axis occupation also inaccessible to the Allies.

The present campaigns of the Axis, in the Atlantic, in Egypt, but especially on the Eastern front, are designed to realise this object. All plans of the Allies for 1943 would remain paper plans, lacking the military strength to implement them, if Hitler attained his object this year. The issue is being decided in 1942 now. It would be madness and treason to leave unutilised an atom of the considerable military power already organised by Britain and the U.S.A. while actually the issue is being decided. This is why the High Commands and Governments of Britain and the U.S.A. endorse at last the urgency of action now.

What is the perspective of Hitler's present operations? To push back the Red Army right back to the Volga and the Urals; to isolate its remnants from the supply routes via Murmansk and Persia, *damaging simultaneously its industrial* base and depriving it of the power to make a counter-offensive; to reach and acquire, or at least deprive the Allies of the oil of the Caucasus and the Middle East; to reach the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, effecting a strategic sea junction, if not yet a land junction, with the Japanese, and so increasing the strain on Allied convoy resources that Allied sea power will be helpless and the Battle of the Atlantic lost.

At this moment 90 per cent. of Hitler's armed force is in action on the decisive front. Of the Anglo-American forces, about 3,000,000 are sitting in Britain, others sitting in Ireland, India, Australia: of over a million in the Middle East only a fraction are engaged. Of course, some of these are necessary garrisons, forced by the defensive strategy practised by the Allies in the last twelve months and the failure to mobilise as Allies the millions of India, but the fact remains that *an overwhelming proportion of the mobilised and trained allied land forces are inactive at this moment of decisive struggle, and that to allow them to remain inactive until the time is decided would be, to repeat the phrase, madness and treason.*

> To an amateur strategist this much does seem clear to me: if a million and a half men cannot hold the British Isles, neither can 3,000,000. Isn't the risk of leaving one million and a half men to defend the British Isles less than the risk of Russian defeat because Hitler was permitted to use his whole strength against the Soviets?
>
> —(Joseph E. Davies, ex-U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.)

Hitler's desire to strike down his enemies "one by one" is not obviated by paper alliances and cartoons representing heroic figures standing shoulder to shoulder, but only by co-ordinated and simultaneous exertion of his enemies' strength.

Hence the British and U.S. Governments' agreement to deal their blow in 1942.

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Why the Allied blow must take the form of a Second Front in Europe.

The Second Front in Europe is the blow that above all others is disadvantageous to a military power occupying the position in Europe of interior lines. The Nazis themselves have let slip abundant testimony to their fear of it. Coulondre, French Ambassador to Berlin in 1939, testified (dispatch of June 1, 1939) to the fact that the Wilhelmstrasse believed that if the Anglo-Soviet pact was signed, and Hitler had to fight on two fronts, he would "give way rather than expose his country, his party, and himself to ruin and defeat." Hitler himself, on June 22, 1941, explained his attack on U.S.S.R. as due to the fact that the existence (not the action, mark you) of the Red Army meant a "tying up of such powerful forces in the East that the radical conclusion of the War in the West, particularly as regards aircraft, could no longer be vouchsafed for by the German High Command," *i.e.*, he dared not risk the possibility of a two-front fight. When on October 2 Hitler proclaimed that U.S.S.R. was already beaten, Dietrich, his press chief, proclaimed it in these terms: "For all purposes Soviet Russia is done with. The British dream of a two-front war is dead." For "British Dream"—read "Nazi Nightmare."

Throughout history, the "two fronts" have always spelled the doom of the Army in the middle, and this whether or no the operation of the second front is militarily successful, considered on its own. The presence of British troops in Spain—the "running sore" as Napoleon called it—was a decisive factor in forcing Napoleon's Army to the tactics that led to its destruction during its Russian invasion. In 1914 the French Ambassador told the Tsar: "The French Army has to withstand the onslaught of twenty-five German Army Corps. I *implore* your Majesty to order your troops to attack immediately. Otherwise the French Army will be crushed." The Russians attacked before their mobilisation was complete. They lost 70,000 killed, 90,000 prisoners and 300 guns, but the Germans withdrew two Army Corps to meet them. Joffre's assistant, General Dupont, wrote afterwards "Two Army Corps removed from the French front. Just imagine them in the place where they belonged! What consequences!" And the battle of the Marne saved Paris. In 1916 again, the Allies implored the Russian Army for an offensive. Again it failed, with enormous losses. But calculations showed later that more than 2,000,000 men had been moved from West to East to meet it. The Austrian offensive against Italy had to be abandoned. The attack against Verdun gradually petered out. The wavering Rumanian Government joined the Allies. Twice in succession the United Cause had been saved by the "blood-donation" on the second front.

Add to its strategically decisive character the fact that the coastline of Europe is the *nearest* point for the Anglo-American forces to engage the enemy. Every factor of the present situation, the shipping bottle-neck, the strain of the Battle of the Atlantic, the successes of Rommel in Libya, are crying reasons making *more* vital, *more* urgent the opening of the Second Front in Europe. The Prime Minister reported in the House of Commons that 4,500 tanks have been sent to the Middle East, 2,000 to the U.S.S.R. It is a wonderful feat, in view of the present difficulty of sea transport. *But how much easier to have delivered far more, with the same shipping tonnage, on the coast of Europe.* How much easier to have given the shipping transport defence of an air umbrella based on Britain. Every British ship that carries British tanks to support the Red Army on the Eastern Front could in the same time have carried many times more to support it at a nearer destination. Reinforcements for Egypt travel 12,000 miles around the Cape. The shipping that carries it could take many times more to a nearer destination, to which Nazi reinforcements originally intended for Rommel would then have to be diverted.

But more important than the Military Reasons are the Political Reasons.

The friends of Hitler, the enemies of Victory, are forever seeking to discredit public discussion of strategy as "amateur." War should be left to the Generals, they say. The opposite is true. As Clemenceau said "War is far too serious a business to be left to the Generals." In war political factors are primary; what may be called the professional-technical factors are secondary. Last year, any rank-

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and file Communist could have been a better adviser to the War Cabinet than all the Generals in the High Command and could have saved the biggest British lost opportunity of the war. Their wits dimmed by Hitlerite propaganda, to which their training and class background offered no defence, the British Generals one and all expected an early collapse of the Red Army. Even so cultivated a General and fine a leader as Wavell spoke of the Soviet resistance as providing an "opportunity for rest" for the British forces. For five months scarcely one British land soldier fired a shot and the chance was missed.

There can be no doubt that if German forces had been diverted from the Eastern front at the moment when the initiative was in the hands of the Red Army, when the German troops were weakened and demoralised, the whole military situation might have been changed and it would certainly have been possible to inflict considerable, if not final defeat, on the main Hitler Army. Let us hope the lesson has not been in vain.

(M. Litvinov, June 22, 1942.)

"That great warrior, Stalin," as the Prime Minister called him, is also a civilian and was once an "amateur." It was as an amateur that he devised and carried through the plan that defeated Denikin, in the teeth of the opposition of the "military experts" appointed by Trotsky. The military experts wanted an advance against Denikin through Cossack country, where Tsarist tradition and counter-revolutionary feeling remained strong. Stalin insisted on the advance being directed through the Donbass, the miner's country, where every civilian would be an irregular helping the Red Army in the enemy's rear. These are the factors that the education of Generals too often leaves out of account.

To-day the Second Front is crucial, not only for the more strictly military reasons discussed above, but for political reasons. It is essential for the morale of the civilian at home, essential to inspire the peoples of the occupied territories, essential to weaken the morale of the enemy, essential for its effect upon the neutral Governments.

The desert may be a paradise for the tactician, as Rommel's commandant is supposed to have remarked, but it is the worst place in the world to fight a people's war. British strategy, or, alternatively, the acquiescence of the Allied High Command in Axis strategy, has so far entailed that British troops have been obliged to fight in territories where the civilian population has been, owing to past Imperial policy, apathetic and indifferent (to quote *The Times* and other observers) or non-existent, as in the desert. In Europe, Hitler, burdened by the Eastern front, treads water in a sea of hostile populations. Abyssinia was a taste of the far different character of a campaign of liberation on a territory where Fascism has practised its monstrous crimes. There is not a coast in Europe where an Anglo-American landing would not be reinforced by every man, woman and child in the neighbourhood.

St. Nazaire could be repeated a thousandfold.

But not a thousand times. Every delay, every raising of hopes to disappoint them, strengthens the power of local Quislings to represent the fight as hopeless, to disunite the national resistance against the occupying forces. The most diverse witnesses confirm the obvious point.

The degree of French national resistance will be, as may be certain, a direct reflection of the powers which Britain, America and Russia can concentrate in Europe against the German Army—that is, against the power which dominates France. French action will respond, more or less proportionately, to the action of the United Nations. The French will acquiesce in Laval if we acquiesce. They will resist only passively if the Allies fight only defensively. They will come forward to meet us if we go forward to meet them. They will take the risks which are somehow commensurate with the risks we take. The developments in France leave us no choice other than to decide that the main immediate theatre of the war for us is the peninsula of Western Europe of which France is the centre.

—(Walter Lippman in the *New York Herald Tribune*, April 18.)

There is hope from Italy, more perhaps than from any other country, but it can be turned to account only if a moral atmosphere is created not only in Italy, but in the world as a whole. We have not a moment to lose. If it is essential that we open a new military front to aid the Russian resistance, it is just as important to create a moral front.

—(Count Carlos Sforza, May 9.)

It is easy for the British public, dwelling too comfortably in a fool's paradise of complacency induced by repeated propaganda that "victory is certain," increases in rations, and radio "relaxation," to remain in ignorance of the crucial *political* importance, in the world-struggle, of the Second Front. We, the people, in Britain and America, know our

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own earnestness of purpose. Too easily we can forget that our countries are—in foreign eyes—those who participated in or abetted Munich, those who did nothing to save Czechoslovakia, Spain, Albania, those whose aid failed to save Norway, the Balkans, Malaya, Burma and other eastern territories. Too easily we can fail to realise the background against which Goebbels' lies that, despite paper promises, Britain and America are too weak to, or do not even mean to, co-ordinate their efforts with U.S.S.R. or aid the overrun peoples gain a persuasive force. The temptations of a Laval, whispering that it is folly to expect a British victory, gain force from every single day's failure of the Anglo-American forces to strike the blow that the military situation so obviously demands.

The action of Japan last year was linked to that failure. The consequences are growing. The Prime Minister has spoken of the evil effect of the Libyan setback in Turkey, in Spain, in France and in French North Africa. The effect of the delay in attempting the patently desirable is still greater. The impudence with which the Portuguese Fascist Salazar—darling of the appeasement elements in Britain—declared on June 25: "Democracy and Liberalism have ended their period, new regimes founded upon the need to avoid disorder and misery have replaced them. Britain has had difficulty in understanding these new regimes which are not essentially anti-British" shows how far Hitler's calculations, by virtue of that delay, are nearing realisation.

Among our Allies, the delay aids his purpose. Free China is not without its unstable would-be Casados. Richard Walls, in the *New York Herald Tribune*, writes of elements whispering there that "if Russia is let down, that will show that China will also be let down." In U.S.A. itself appeasers are proclaiming the alleged "idle three million army" in Britain as proof of British insincerity and independability.

The front *must* be opened to check the main political infiltration of Hitler now creeping forward on a world-scale.

Imperative above all is the effect of the Second Front on the Home Front. It must never be forgotten that the same elements that betrayed France—the maggots in the apple—still exist in British public *life. The men who shook hands with* Hitler, who strengthened him and Mussolini in their aggressions out of hatred of popular movements have not been executed, have not been imprisoned. They are still at large, even in places of authority; their hatred, their desire to betray, has not abated with the conclusion of the Anglo-Soviet alliance and the growing integration of the fight for Soviet survival with that for British and American liberties. On the contrary, their activity and their determination to save Fascism, even by preventing victory, has increased. Unlike their corresponding numbers in U.S.A., openly denouncing Roosevelt and the war, they dare not speak, or their utterances are limited to faint praise of Churchill "but" . . . Just as in France, so here, inactivity in the field is the hotbed in which their corruption grows and flourishes. With increasing battle, with offensive action, so the national awareness of the danger they constitute and determination to crush them would increase.

This is Hitler's plan. The complacent idea that the balance will remain stationary and that we have a choice between hurrying dangerously or plodding patiently and *surely is his chief card. The plodding pro*vides the setting in which he increases his strength and corrupts ours.

Here is a special pre-view extract from *Mein Sieg*, the sequel to *Mein Kampf*, which Adolf Hitler, World-Fuehrer, no doubt plans to write during one of his holidays in the White House or on the Scottish Moors about 1945:—

A chapter from an unwritten book?

The failure of the Hess mission to procure direct immediate results lulled the enemy, just as I required. I never really supposed that I should obtain direct, formal assent to an alliance against the Soviets. This was a wild hope; class interests amongst the pluto-democracies do not often work quite so obviously. But I calculated, in attacking the U.S.S.R., that the class-prejudices of sufficient sections among the rulers in both Britain and America would be gradually more and more engaged so as to find pretexts to avoid effective aid to the U.S.S.R. before it was too late. The first year, 1941, was quite easy. So successful had Goebbels been in painting a convincing picture of Soviet decadence that no one among the allied Commands expected Soviet resistance to last, and no prepara-

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tions for a Second Front were made at all. At first I could hardly credit such folly, but all my doubts were set at rest by a public assurance given by the then British Ambassador at Washington, a man whose policies, it will be remembered, had been so useful to us during the pre-war period.

In 1942 the matter was touch and go. Despite all propaganda on the part of my friends, the logic of the military situation was so obvious that the British and American High Commands, headed by the pluto-democratic war-makers Roosevelt and Churchill, began to appreciate the necessity for a Second Front and even began to undertake it. None the less, by wire-pulling behind the scenes, my friends succeeded in imposing so slow a tempo in the preparations that eventually it was delayed too late. Their methods were manifold, but all simple. They spoke of how much better 1943 would be than 1942 (while I was busy pushing the Red Army back and fortifying the coast on which they talked of landing!). They pretended that a Second Front in Europe was only in the Russian, not the British interest, and tried to sow all sorts of distrust of the Soviet Ally. They advocated the preferential nature of other fronts, so far from the British-American bases that they strained their limited transport resources, and remote also from the populations I had subjected, but which could so easily have been roused against me. They warned of "social dangers" of invading Europe, pointing out that while there would be no doubt that populations like the French and Spanish would welcome and aid any landing, this would be bound to result in rebellion against Laval or France, who after all did represent lawfully-constituted authority, and this would be unhealthy in example. (At the same time, of course, my agents were pointing to Laval and Franco that this Anglo-American inactivity betokened weakness; indeed, this inactivity was finally the greatest single factor in inducing these men and others eventually to throw their resources entirely behind my purpose.) They declared that Britain and America were "too weak" to invade (entirely obscuring, of course, how much my difficulties would have been increased by the attempt at invasion of the Continent, whether successful or no). This led straight on, at a later stage, to enabling them to sow defeatism; "If Britain and America were too weak to invade when the Red Army was still on the Don, what hope had they of victory now that Hitler had pushed the Red Army to the Volga and was nearing the Caucasus?" This was the type of argument they used on my behalf to create disunity and delay. Meantime others of my friends were pouring out demands for the servitude of the German people after an allied victory; this was a godsend to me at home, for our own propaganda was wearing thin in credibility after our disappointment on the Russian front; and by reproducing it at home we just managed to pull through the difficult period. My friends were busy, too, on the one hand provoking the workers to restiveness by harshness or incompetence in management, on the other frightening the capitalists by alleging that the people would resent being asked for the further necessary sacrifice that a Second Front would entail.

The mass movement that could have dispelled this notion, inspired the people and encouraged the Government to act speedily, failed. To split it, we relied on the folly of men in the Labour camp, who out of blind hatred for Communism and Communists, forbade their followers to take part in the mobilising activity, declaring that military matters were much better left to experts. We were not mistaken, they even aided our friends to ban the paper of this movement that attempted to rouse the people and strengthen the Government, under pretext that its publication would prejudice the successful prosecution of the war!

The British Government rejected the Hess proposals. They were indeed put too formally. None the less, thanks to these efforts I have described, my calculations were justified in the event. I was left to weaken Russia virtually undisturbed by any campaign of interruption. The spectacle of this desertion or impotence won me over the rulers of the remaining neutrals and confused and disheartened those of many of the belligerents. After that the rest was easy.

We must see to it that this book is never written.

BUT . . . This mock extract helps to drive home the peril of the position. The Government has made its decision corresponding to the necessities of the position, but the implementation of the decision with *sufficient speed* by no means follows automatically.

It can only be achieved if every man-jack, alert to the danger, goes into action for it.

The debates in the House of Lords and Commons on the "Central Direction of the War" showed this clearly. It was no accident that the first debate on the conduct of the war following the Anglo-Soviet alliance and the Government's declaration of agreement on the urgency of the Second Front took the form of the first motion of No Confidence moved against the Government.

Since the kernel of war strategy to-day is the Second Front, which has been endorsed by the Government, every attempt to undermine the Government is an attempt to postpone the Second Front; just as every attempt to discredit the Second Front is an attempt to weaken the Government.

Of all those taking part in the debate, only W. Gallacher brought this to the fore.

The policy which up to 1939 and even to 1940 hoped to destroy Socialism and make reaction safe by diverting Hitler

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against U.S.S.R., and which expressed itself in 1941 by the hope that Germany and the Soviet Union would weaken each other sufficiently to enable a new deal to be done with Hitler on the basis of his resulting weakness, expresses itself in 1942 not directly—for it dare not openly avow its purpose (yet)—but in the effort to diminish the sense of urgency among the people for the Second Front and to weaken the Government so that it shall hesitate to demand the effort and sacrifice that the Second Front in Europe would entail. The postponement of fuel-rationing and the continued hampering of production by resistance to regional re-organisation and production committees shows the strength and power to influence of these intriguers.

Fools are acting as cover to these schemes, but the hard core are those whose policy of appeasement, though it has hidden itself and taken different forms, has never wavered.

To defeat this, our own effort is absolutely indispensable. The construction of national unity around a sense of unity and urgency and sacrifice that will isolate the enemy.

It is insufficiently realised what the Second Front entails. It means more men entering the forces. It means higher production, despite the flow of men. It means less imports of food while shipping tonnage is used in increased measure for war supplies. It means a lower standard of living—far lower—by the diversion of these imports and the turning of national production, in still greater measure, toward war necessities. It means heavy casualty lists.

It means sacrifice so great that no weak Government would dare demand it.

Those who know Fascism, who know the generations of misery and degradation that it brings, who know the strength of Fascism and the much greater cost that its destruction would entail if the opportunity of defeating it this year were missed, are eager to face this sacrifice. Our whole people can be fired with the same eagerness. To fire them, a campaign *not only of precept but of example* is necessary. A united campaign of the working-class movement around this issue would fortify the Government to overcome the resistance of the appeasers, including those not yet removed from its own ranks, and enable to realise the Second Front unhesitatingly and in time. Those in the ranks of Labour who, for party motives or others still less creditable, seek to hamper and handicap such a united campaign, are in action, even if not in intent, leaving a door open to Fascist infiltration and prejudicing the chance of defeating Fascism. The old pre-war bans to-day make nonsense. Labour Party standing rulings, for example, would O.K. collaboration with Danish Social-Democrat Ministers, now co-operating with Hitler, and Finnish Social-Democrats, now fighting on his side—since they are members of the Labour and Socialist International—while outlawing half the army of Czech, French and Jugoslav patriots now braving Hitler's firing squads—because they are Communists. Communist and Labour Party lads fight together, sail together and fly together in uniform against the common foe, but in the hour when the need is vital also to stand together in factory and on platform to hold the home front firm—the Transport House pundits prate about "attempts to exploit the present situation and compromise our well-known political standpoint after the war" for all the world like the worst steel and shipping interests seeking to maintain their post-war profits and let the whole war now go hang. *We* can see the danger, others may be too blind, too habit-bound, or too complacent. The time is NOW. And by our urgency and example we *must* build National Unity despite their folly and opposition.

1942 is the year of decision. Victory this year, or—at worst defeat, at best lengthened struggle with all the mischances of disaster and heightened misery that this would involve before victory. *More than half of* 1942 *is already gone.* The British and United States Governments have agreed to the establishment of the Second Front in Europe at the eleventh hour. That hour—*NOW*—must be Zero hour for us. Nothing less than the utmost energy from now on of everyone of us who understands its urgency will translate that agreement into action in time.

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Firm Will and Work for the Second Front

by J. R. SCOTT

TO defeat Hitler and destroy Fascism we must have a second front in Europe. The fighting forces must be mobilised not only to effect a landing in Europe but also to maintain it. In parallel to this we must produce better and quicker. The second front, or indeed any battle front, is not determined only by the availability of an army, navy, and air force. There has to exist a tremendous organisation of direct munitions in the form of tanks, guns, shells, aeroplanes and (for the sake of a better term) the indirect munitions of large and small ships, food supplies, lines of communications, railways, building materials, engineering products of a manifold and varied character.

We propose therefore to examine all this latter category which in a general way is lumped together under the term "Production."

Production is not only an engineers' or a miners' problem, but it also affects every branch of essential needs—building workers, railroad workers, clothing workers. In fact, every man and woman throughout the length and breadth of the country must view this matter with personal as well as national interest. They must realise that they, that the working-class, have a decisive part to play; and this should be the foremost thought also in the minds of all representatives in the Trade Union sphere. Many, while responding to the needs of the workers, too often forget that the very greatest need of the workers is the defeat of Fascism and that anything or any method or form of action which is not in tune with this greatest need is against the fundamental interests of the working-class.

Hundreds of thousands of men are trained and equipped with the essentials necessary for an invasion. But there still needs a large volume of reserves, which in their recruitment will make a tremendous drain on the man-power of the country, a steady diminution of the number of men now in the factories, workshops and industry generally. At the same time the situation calls for a rapid and constant increase of production so as to maintain and equip the ever-growing fighting forces. This means we have to examine with minute care and attention every system and method of manufacture so as to eliminate wasted time and material, poor material, and organise transport supplies and details.

To effect this Herculean task, every able-bodied man and woman will have to be mobilised. Time does not permit leisured selection by individual people of what they consider to be their best pursuit. Every individual's inclinations must be absolutely subservient to the immediate needs of the moment.

The machine created to organise and control this vast organisation needs to extend the principles of democracy so as to bring into active control and direction the many people in the Trades Union and Labour movement, many of the tried and trusted and efficient shop stewards. To give life to such a machine the organised workpeople who have already shown initiative must be brought right into the leading positions of control and direction.

Thousands upon thousands of women are needed for the workshops, many of whom will be unable to give full-time service owing to domestic responsibilities, but can give their services in a part-time capacity. All these women need training in the workshops. They have to be taught by the skilled craftsman in the factories, not in the hopes or expectation of making them fully-trained mechanics in a short space of time, but to give them sufficient training which would at the moment provide them with the general knowledge to enable them to take their place in the army of production. From that position they would be entitled to progress on to the more skilled jobs by the extent to which they developed their knowledge and experience of industry.

To assist in the immediate mobilisation of women for the factories the wages problem must be solved at once. Whilst it is true to say that there is in existence an agreement which provides for women being paid rates progressing up to the rate paid to the skilled man they replace, the uncomfortable fact is that the overwhelming proportion of women in the factories (and it will be so in the future unless something is done about it) are in receipt

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of what is known as "the national women's rate" of 43/- a week of 47 hours. The reason for this is that the employers contend that they are engaged upon work which is commonly performed by women in industry. To the extent to which processes become more simplified and production is on a mass scale and to the extent to which more women enter factory life, so will the term "commonly performed by women in industry" become more vicious. Women's wages are scandalously low and the whole organised labour movement in the country must voice and back the demand for higher minimum rates. This is not "blackmail" or "taking advantage of a war situation," but a hundred per cent. justifiable demand which must be conceded immediately, not only in the interest of the women and the men whose jobs they are doing, but what is still more important—in order that the Second Front in Europe may be opened and maintained.

The transference of labour-supply is another matter to be faced in a courageous and resolute fashion. There are certain sections of industry which are passing from the manufacture of defensive weapons to offensive weapons. There is the demand for more ships and repair of ships which must be met at once. This raises the whole question of possible large transfers of labour, not only from factory to factory within a district, but to and from many districts throughout Great Britain. Ships of all sizes, barges and landing craft we must have in super-abundance. Workers who have any sort of experience in this work may in the near future be called upon to transfer to the areas equipped with the tools and machinery capable of undertaking this work. The call must be answered readily and with the absolute minimum of friction. A major difficulty is the existence of a number of district rates of a variable range within 10/- a week. There is no justification for the varying rates to-day. Rationing and price-fixing of commodities has levelled the question; and the unions' demand of a national base rate must be conceded.

In the operation of the directing orders governing labour-supply a good feature has been introduced whereby the Labour Supply Officers are expected to consult the workers' representatives at the factory from which it is intended to transfer workpeople. Nevertheless, the machinery of democratic operation of transference can and must be widely extended. The Unions, with their vast apparatus, must be brought in officially to handle this question. The Unions, with the Labour Supply Officers, can be made fully aware of the needs of the moment and can explain this in full to the workpeople so to be affected. When this is done a very large percentage—if not all—transferences can be carried through on a voluntary basis.

Similar steps must be taken with the Man-Power Boards. These Boards at the moment are most undemocratic in their appointment. The Trade Unions have no place on the Boards; the very organisations which have to deal with man-power reservations and de-reservations in a given area. Regional Boards, which have the responsibility of co-ordinating production in a given area, must also bring in the workers' organisations into joint executive authority. The power and scope of Regional Boards has been considerably extended arising from the Citrine Report, but it is nothing short of a public scandal that the Minister of Production in the appointment of full-time Chairman of the Regional Boards has apparently deliberately failed to appoint one single Trade Union or working-class representative.*

Why is it so necessary to raise sharply the demand for full and unfettered democratic representation at all the committees and boards directing and controlling directly and indirectly the production of the country? It is because it is a people's war, a war in which it is a struggle to the end between the peoples and the forces

* When the Minister of Production (Mr. Lyttelton) read out in the House of Commons the list of the eleven Chairmen (also his Regional Controllers) whom he had appointed almost entirely from big firms, the following questions were asked:—

Mr. Shinwell: Is the right hon. Gentleman quite satisfied that he has not left out any capitalist interests?

Mr. Gallacher: When selections of this kind are being made, are the millions of practical workers with great experience never considered? Is it always just the same limited small gang of profit-mongers? It is a shameful thing, and that is how all the trouble has taken place.

Mr. Lyttelton: I have already said that these names have been selected very carefully as being most suitable for the business.

[Parliamentary Debates, June 30, 1942.]

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and organisation of Fascism. Fascism cannot be defeated by copying their methods, but by actually building a structure based upon the issues of the war—for freedom, liberty, and democracy; and no people's war can be waged successfully if the people and their organisations are not playing their full and unrestrictive part.

Every one knows of the shocking state of production throughout the country a year or more ago. Captains of industry, the bitter defenders of "managerial functions," were in the main the cause of that scandalous position. Waste and mismanagement were the order of the day. True stories which sounded fantastic were being related from factories in all parts of the country. Something had to be done about it. It was useless to rely upon the old methods. The men in the workshops played a leading part in exposing the sad state of affairs and in doing so raised very sharply the demand that they themselves should have a say in the methods of production in the factories. The demand for joint production committees in the factories found ready support amongst the wide mass of people. The Trade Unions in the engineering industry took up the agitation and in the early part of this year made agreements with the Minister of Supply and later on with the Engineering and Allied Employers' Federation covering the organisation and establishment of joint production committees in the factories. These committees provide for a number of elected representatives of the workpeople together with the same number of appointed representatives of the management, each with their secretaries, whose joint responsibility it shall be to discuss all matters affecting production in that particular factory. It is not possible here to go into detail on the successful operation of production committees, but this much can be stated without fear of contradiction: wherever production committees have been established and are really handling the job they have been assigned to do, then not only has production increased, but absenteeism has been reduced, quality as well as quantity has been improved and the general problems which have been attendant heretofore have been brought to a minimum. Such has been the result of democratic extension in the field of production. The organised workers have shown quite clearly and decisively that they are not allowing hidebound practices of "managerial functions" to stand in the way of achieving maximum production. So must this principle be extended to all industries and to the controlling and directing committees in all phases of production, man-power, labour supply, and so on.

There are yet a number of problems that need to be dealt with and there will undoubtedly be a number crop up in the future which we cannot at the moment see clearly.

One thing is certain, and that is that the opening of a second front will need in the front line, not only soldiers, sailors and airmen, but a large number of skilled artisans of all trades and professions. We have admired the heroism and courage of the Russian people in the operation of "scorched earth," but it is well to recognise that the Fascists have also learned the lessons of that policy—they have had first-hand experience. We should understand fully that the moment our troops effect a landing in Europe they will be met with scorched earth and destruction by the plenty. Gas works, electricity undertakings, railroads, water supplies, sewerage and all such things will be ruthlessly destroyed; and because of that we will need fighting men who are also skilled in the work of immediately reconstructing and rebuilding such important necessities.

Not only does this mean that a large number of skilled artisans will be needed in the fighting forces, but it will mean something that is equally important, in that large numbers of fighting men will need to have in their curriculum of training a first-hand knowledge and experience of such civil engineering duties. This may mean that numbers of new fighting men will have to have some practical training in the electricity stations, waterworks, builders' jobs and so on. Such suggestions may meet with fierce resistance by workers on the jobs unless they are fully consulted and understand to the limit how essential this will be. The Second Front and the defeat of Fascism can be no one-sided affair. All the risks and hazards have to be shared by all. We cannot ask the lads in the fighting forces to take risks unless all on the home front take risks as well. The fears and prejudices as to what is going to happen after the war are in the main based on a failure to realise the growing strength

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of the working class, of the Trade Union organisations with the shop stewards in the factories, of the increased power that comes with increased responsibility for production. The industrial situation has been transformed in this last period : and those who harp on old fears and prejudices are blind to the potentialities for the future, if indeed they have not in some cases a lack of conviction that the people can defeat Fascism. But in that case their blindness is even worse, for without the defeat of Fascism there can be no future for anyone, least of all the organisations of the working class. It is with this conception, the objective gauging of the situation that we examine industrial unrest and their outcome—stoppages of work and strikes.

True it is that the major responsibility for strikes rests on the shoulders of the employers, a number of whom seem determined to hang on at whatever costs to their privileges, customs and habits. But their arrogant attitude should not be a reason or excuse for workers falling into the position in which unwittingly they play "Hitler's game." A reactionary management which endangers production can be dealt with, not by the workers withdrawing their labour, but by demanding and securing the removal of such a management.

Any slowing down of production, any break or standstill in the continuous stream of production is directly—not indirectly—a contributory cause in delaying the opening of the second front, a lengthening of the war and thereby striking a blow for Hitler and Fascism. In this present situation, justifiable demands of the workers (some of which have been dealt with in this article) can be obtained without recourse or use of stoppages of work.

It did not need wholesale stoppages of work to establish production committees, one of the great gains of the workers in this war. The people demanded certain changes in the Government some months ago and their demands were met. Changes can be made in all the spheres of war activity and grievances rectified, but to engage or promote stoppages of work in this situation in which man-power in the factories has to be brought to a minimum is not only bad, but is terrible to contemplate. A horrible aspect of this phase is the fact that some of the "keenest" advocates of strike actions (and they are in high places as well as in the workshops) are those who in normal times would not only lack the courage to advocate such action, but who would in addition play no small part in breaking the strike from the most convenient place, whether it be from the inside or the outside.

Playing with strikes at this moment is playing with fire. A reactionary policy by employers (but not only of employers) can take on a provocative aspect ; and there are dark forces lurking and waiting for an opportunity. Representatives of working men and working women have a responsibility to take up demands and grievances ; but their highest responsibility is to maintain firm will and work for the second front.

Every man and woman to their part ! The fighting forces and the production forces in the factories, mines, mills, transport and depots, each and all harnessed to the task before us, the opening of the second front, the defeat and destruction of Fascism in the shortest possible space of time !

[*Readers know Mr. J. R. Scott as a member of the A.E.U. Executive Council. It must be clearly understood that this article is written by him in a personal capacity.*]

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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Family Allowances

by PETER KERRIGAN

QUESTIONS of family allowances, often put forward in the last twenty years, especially by Liberal capitalists, have now become much more prominent. It was raised again in Parliament in the early summer, when the House of Lords discussed it. Then on June 23 in the House of Commons, on the motion of the Conservative Wing - Commander Wright, seconded by the Liberal Independent Miss Eleanor Rathbone, a resolution was carried without division which

commends for the immediate consideration of the Government the institution of a national scheme of allowances for dependent children.

For very many years the question has been discussed in the Labour Party, and in the past was advocated by the I.L.P. and the Fabians against the standpoint of the Trade Unions. By the end of May, at the Labour Party Conference, the vote was 1,718,000 in favour and 690,000 against, with certain abstentions. The attitude of the organised working-class movement will be determined when the subject comes up again for consideration at the Trades Union Congress in September.

Considerable sympathy has been generated for the proposal, particularly because of the difficulties facing parents of large families in wartime fighting an apparently hopeless battle to maintain their children with insufficient wages, inadequate social services, and with the cost of living leaving wage increases well behind. Just because of this situation we should not permit ourselves to be stampeded. An examination of the whole problem will serve to show us that the continued opposition of large unions, such as the Transport and General Workers' Union, and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, to family allowances is sound.

The Government White Paper issued in May sets out the principal arguments for the scheme, rather feebly indicates part of the opposition case, and then examines the cost of both contributory and non-contributory schemes involving a payment of 5s. per child. A non-contributory scheme covering every child irrespective of income level of parents would cost £132,000,000 in the first year, but after that would be reduced to £64,000,000. This is because other payments such as billeting allowances, allowances for children of men in the forces, pensions, workmen's compensation allowances, allowances for children of war victims, and income tax allowances for children would all have the equivalent of the 5s. per week child allowance deducted from the total to be paid to parents or dependants. The Labour Party *Speakers' Notes* in June made it perfectly clear that they agree with this because they say "That the family allowance should be substituted for the first 5s. of other children's allowances under public schemes."

The effect of this at the present time would be that parents whose children are evacuated, and who pay 6s. towards each child (whose foster parent gets paid from 10s. 6d. to 16s. 6d. according to Government scales), would now find that 5s. weekly was deducted from the amount to the foster parents by the Government, and they would have to add their 5s. weekly allowance to the existing 6s. now paid to the local education authorities. Of course, the Government might make some book-keeping adjustment, but the effect would be to leave the parents in much the same position as at present.

As the Labour Party scheme also says "That the income tax allowance for children eligible for family allowances should be abolished," this matter would need to be adjusted in respect to children in the same or a similar manner.

A man on 100 per cent. Workman's Compensation with three children would receive for them 15s. from the State instead of the present 11s., *i.e.*, a net gain of 4s. per week. The same applies to unemployment benefit allowances. Children of war victims would be exactly in the same position as at present, because their parents receiving 5s. family allowances would have this deducted from existing allowances, all of which are above 5s., ranging from 5s. 3d. to 11s. according to category. *These examples are given to make clear that the proposed 5s. allowance does not mean an addition of*

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is. to the income of all parents. This point needs to be borne in mind when considering wage demands at the moment because for big sections of the workers family allowances would be no gain, whilst they would be used as a means of stopping wage increases that are fully justified because of the hardship caused by low wage rates for important groups in a number of industries.

Let us here take what is the fundamental objection to family allowances. An examination of the history of such schemes proves that family allowances can be, and are, used not to increase the standard of living of the workers but, on the contrary, to make the single man's standard the fodder basis. All other services, including the existing social services for children, are to be met out of the family allowances. This was the experience in Belgium and other countries where the system had operated, and it would be the same here. It has an immediate effect on the wages position of the workers. This effect has to be considered, particularly in light of the traditional wages policy of the British trade unions in arguing a case for increases based on the concept of the "average family of man, wife and three children." There can be no shadow of doubt that if to-morrow such a scheme was introduced in Britain, *it would be used to block all attempts* at wage increases.

Over twenty years ago capitalist statisticians began to proclaim that under modern conditions this "average family" no longer exists; that there are large numbers of adult workers who are unmarried, or widowers or childless (but who, of course may, and often have, other dependants to support); and that families of five (parents plus three dependant children) were in a minority and were therefore no longer "average" families. As R. P. Dutt wrote in his *Socialism and the Living Wage* fifteen years ago :—

> this brilliant discovery of the capitalist statistical hacks . . . at once suggested to the capitalists that *they have evidently been paying too much.* If only some collective pooling system could be devised to pay for the actual dependant children in the minority of cases where these do exist, then a much lower basis could be fixed for all workers as such, apart from their dependants, and for the majority of workers only this basic wage need be paid. Thus the aggregate wages bill would be lowered. This is the capitalist theory of family allowances, and under Capitalism this is the inevitable working-out of any system of family allowances.

Actually it worked out exactly in this way in the Australian Commonwealth, where it was argued that a high minimum wage would eat up all profits and that profits would be saved by introducing the device of family allowances. On the basis of their experience, a few years later, the official Labour comment expressed in *The Australian Worker* was

> The substitution of child endowment for an increase in the basic wage will put millions into the pockets of the employing class. (*A.W.*, 29.12.26.).

What are the arguments for the scheme as set out in Kingsley Wood's Memorandum ? (Would it be too much to suggest that in it is to be seen the delicate touch of Mr. J. M. Keynes, since elevated to the peerage in the latest Honours List ?) :—

> (i) The effect of family allowances in lessening the risk of malnutrition (with consequential deleterious results upon health, efficiency and well-being) in the case of large families ;
>
> (ii) The difficulty of putting the parents of large families into a position to meet the increased cost of living by means of increased wages without increasing wages all round, and so setting up an inflationary movement ;
>
> (iii) The possible influence of family allowances in encouraging parenthood and therefore in counteracting the decline in the national birth-rate ;
>
> (iv) The fact that income tax relief is given in respect of children whose parents are liable to income tax ; it is held that parents not so liable ought to receive a similar benefit by way of cash allowance.

The third of these arguments, that family allowances would counteract the decline in the birth-rate, was also put forward as his first ground by the Conservative M.P. who moved the House of Commons resolution on June 23. But this argument will not hold water, for the simple reason that where family allowances have been tried the decline in the birth-rate has not been stopped. In the *Economist* of July 11 a writer (himself a strong supporter, on other grounds, of family allowances) renounces this weak argument and points out that both in the Weimar Republic of Germany and in the French Republic the birth-rate continued to decline in spite of family allowances.

In the Soviet Union there is no such anxiety about the birth-rate. The whole

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social system, by its removal of insecurity and of fear of unemployment, by its constant improvement of the material and cultural conditions of the masses, and by its net-work of social services for maternity, for nursing mothers, for children of school age and pre-school age, has found a better solution than flat-rate family allowances. There families can "be afforded;" there Socialism provides the basis for a family life that is free of care and for a happy childhood. Only when the number of children is more than seven is an allowance paid to mothers for the eighth and subsequent children. Up to seven (nine in a family) the Socialist state of workers and peasants has provided conditions which make it unnecessary to consider a flat-rate allowance for each child.

The whole case is contained in the second of the above arguments. Yet apply that to industry to-day. Early in June the miners were awaiting a decision on their claim for 4s. per shift for all over 18, and 2s. per shift for those under 18. That claim was based on a number of factors, viz., before the war miners were far too low paid; their wage increases since the war have not kept pace with the increased cost of living; in comparison to other industries their earnings are lower; the occupation of mining is so dangerous and arduous as to demand special qualities, etc. It was then estimated that to grant their claim in full would mean paying out a sum amounting to more than half the total required to pay family allowances to all in this country after the first year. Family allowances are the easy method of dealing with the disparity which is growing between the cost of living and wages. Such a method would have very bad results for the workers.

Of course, a case for family allowances in wartime could be made out IF wages had been brought up to approximately the increase in the cost of living; IF prices, not only of foodstuffs but also of all other essentials, were stabilised; IF deductions of income tax were taking place from current earnings; and IF we have effective rationing of all goods in short supply. The fact is we do not have these things, and Kingsley Wood's last Budget with increased taxes on the workers helped to widen the gap between wages and prices at a time when earnings have dropped for large numbers in the war industries owing to reductions in Sunday work and overtime.

In the present circumstances, therefore, it is essential to give support to the lower-paid workers, or those whose wages have fallen so far behind the increased cost of living, in order to secure improvements in their rates that will bring them into line. Support for policies designed to block this would be wrong.

There are other features of the proposed scheme that require consideration. In Kingsley Wood's memorandum the following passage occurs :—

> Before any decision could usefully be reached at the present time, it would be necessary to explore further the question of whether a system of cash allowances would be appropriate in present circumstances, when the problem is perhaps less one of cash than of supplies; and it would also be necessary to consider whether, apart from the other issues involved, practical difficulties, including the stringency of manpower, would or would not preclude the introduction of a scheme in time of war.

Now there are very strong forces in this country who would be delighted to adopt a scheme of family allowances to be introduced at the end of the war or just before it ended. Remember we will soon be entering the fourth year of the war. With the signing of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty and decision for a Second Front in Europe in 1942, we can honestly say that we do see the prospect of the war ending within a much speedier time than previously.

A family allowance scheme launched at the end of the war would be a definite handicap on the workers in maintaining and improving their wage standards. One has only to consider some of "the influential sections of the Conservative Party" who support this scheme to realise the reason for their interest in it. It is the same type who object to giving engineers a wage increase because they do not want to build up wage standards that will handicap them in the cut-throat fight for markets which they envisage after the war. Of course, we have different views from these. No one can predict just exactly what the situation will be following the war. We do know, however, that the present Government in Britain is a Coalition with a Tory majority. We do know that the programme of that Government (which we support) is limited to

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defeating Hitler and his Axis associates, fully implementing the new Anglo-Soviet Treaty, and for endeavouring to reorganise Europe on the basis of these agreements. But that does not mean we have the guarantee of Socialism immediately following the war. The speed with which we secure Socialism will depend on the strength of our movement and the part we play now. Therefore, do not let us do anything that can be a serious handicap to us in the future.

The first part of the quotation above has to be taken in conjunction with the articles that appeared in the *Financial News* and in *The Times*. Both these papers are enthusiastic backers of family allowances and for the scheme to be introduced as soon as possible. But they do not share with the supporters of family allowances in the Labour Party the idea that it should be paid in cash. The *Financial News* wants it paid in kind. Here is the argument :—

> In wartime there is a particularly practical argument in favour of distributing family allowances in this way, since the communal satisfaction of needs is more economical of national resources than the individual spending of cash payments. A compromise might take the form of an issue of vouchers, which could be used as money but only for the purchase of a range of goods and services necessary to children. This would preserve some element of consumers' choice, but would ensure that it was exercised as between the various requirements of children rather than between say more luxuries for the parents or more food for the children.

Finally, let me put the following points. Existing social services are insufficient. The solution clearly is not a system of family allowances which does not improve these social services, but on the contrary by paying 5s. per week makes this the basic social service, swallowing up most of the existing schemes. It is worth noting here that 5s. for every child is the maximum, and there are proposals which contemplate excluding the first child or the first two, while another suggestion is that the scheme should be contributory with a weekly payment as high as 2s. 8d. per week.

No, the thing is to intensify the demand for improvements in present social services.

The outstanding need is to get an immediate increase in the service pay allowances and pensions for wives and children of all men in the Armed Forces. It is vital at this juncture to extend the whole scope of free meals in school for children. Now that we are going to have to make big economies in the use of domestic fuel, the free meals service must be supplemented by free milk supplies for all children at school.

It is along these lines we should be striving just now and unions such as the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, etc., will be doing a service to the British workers if they fight vigorously for their viewpoint on the question of family allowances at the forthcoming Trades Union Congress.

Let us never forget that the main issue for all of us is how to speedily defeat Hitler. If the T.U.C. delegates keep this constantly in mind family allowances will be approached in a more realistic manner than was done at the Labour Party Conference.

India and Freedom

by CLEMENS DUTT

THE decision of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress to threaten a new movement of mass civil disobedience to enforce the demand for the withdrawal of British political power from India is a disastrous step for the fate of India in a critical situation. It is also a measure of the disastrous failure to establish India as an equal partner in the world-wide struggle of the free peoples against Fascism. It is a decision which in its operation inevitably puts the Indian people into the position of dissociating themselves from a world cause on which the freedom of all peoples from Fascist tyranny and imperialist subjection, and their own freedom and independence also, ultimately depends.

At this moment, when the enemy already stands at the gates of India, when battles decisive for the future of the world are developing, India has a central part to play in the world front against Fascism. By its geographical situation, its

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strategic significance, its actual and potential resources in man-power and material, it occupies a key-position of vital significance, not only for Asia but for every front of the allied nations.

It is impossible for us here to wash our hands of the situation that has been created. The disastrous possibilities inherent in the decision of the Indian National Congress makes it the more urgent and imperative to carry forward the campaign here for a new approach on the basis of the establishment of a national government in India which will mobilise the Indian people for the defence of India and full participation in the war.

It may be urged that there can be no question of a new approach because the ground has already been fully explored by Sir Stafford Cripps in his visit to India. A leading article in *The Times* (July 15, 1942) says of this visit: "The offer we made is comprehensive and complete and in principle leaves nothing over that it is within our power to give."

The picture is presented of Sir Stafford Cripps arriving with a new and generous offer which was not taken advantage of because communal and sectional rivalries prevented its acceptance and because the major Indian political body, the Indian National Congress, demanded an impossible alteration of the constitution which would in effect give full independence immediately and the Congress a monopoly of power.

The central fact about the Cripps mission is that the offer he conveyed consisted only of (*a*) a promise of Dominion Status after the war, described by Mr. Gandhi as "a post-dated cheque on a bank which is already crashing," and (*b*) a vague paragraph on the co-operation of the peoples of India with the government in the defence of India, which boiled down in the negotiations to a proposal for the further enlargement of the Viceroy's Executive Council to include an Indian defence minister with a limited province and very restricted powers.

It is desirable to reproduce the text of this proposal as given in the document.

> During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort, but the task of organising to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations.

The attempt is made to portray this as the offer of a "National Government." A survey of the Cripps mission in *The Times* (July 4, 1942) states: "For the immediate purpose of associating India fully with the war it proposed the establishment of a National Government." Fundamental changes were ruled out, but "it was made clear that the term 'National Government' would be interpreted in the most liberal spirit." But the declaration says nothing about a National Government. It says that responsibility for the defence of India must remain in British hands. And Sir Stafford Cripps emphasised in his speech in the House of Commons: "I had from the outset made it clear that it was not possible to make any constitutional changes except of the most insignificant kind."

It is impossible, therefore, not to recognise that the Cripps proposals, far from ushering in a new epoch, were a continuation of the same die-hard imperialist policy expressed in the so-called "August Offer" made by the Secretary of State for India, L. S. Amery, in August 1940, which was in fact couched in very similar terms and was described by Jawaharlal Nehru as an "insult to India."

Mr. Amery has just published a collection of his speeches of the last two years*, full of simple faith in the British mission of Empire ("our Empire in India just grew . . . for the simple reason that it was acceptable to the people of India") (p. 112) and it can be seen from it how correctly he summed up the Cripps mission in his speech in Parliament on April 28, 1942, as "the epilogue of an old chapter."

This is borne out also by the recently published survey of the Cripps mission made by Professor Coupland.† This popular statement of the Government's case has a note opposite the contents :"This book is produced in complete conformity

* *India and Freedom*. By L. S. Amery. Oxford University Press, 3s6*d*.

† *The Cripps Mission*. By R. Coupland. Oxford University Press, 1s.

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with the authorised economy standards." Economy seems to have been exercised in producing the arguments of the other side, but one thing the author has to admit and that is : "In principle, in fact, the Draft Declaration went no further than the 'August Offer' " (p. 30). He explains, however, that it was "an advance on the Offer." The auctioneering terminology suggests that the Government's increased bid was only the minimal coin of the realm, but Mr. Coupland points out : "It was more concrete and constructive. It elucidated the meaning of Dominion status."

Mr. Coupland explains at some length the impossibility of transferring the Indian Civil Service and Police to Indian hands. "To transform their status now . . . is out of the question," he says bluntly (p. 58). One wonders whether the Japanese would take that view. This negative attitude of *non possumus* is the same sterile conservatism that refused to face the political problems of the defence of Singapore, Java and Burma.

The failure of the Cripps mission was not due to any unwillingness to negotiate on the part of the Indian nationalist leaders. It would not have been unnatural if Nehru and others who had been so long in prison had adopted a strictly "Sinn Fein" attitude and turned a blind eye to international problems. On the contrary, the Indian National Congress has always been conscious of its international responsibility and has repeatedly expressed the readiness of the Indian people to co-operate with other freedom - loving peoples against Fascism and aggression. Mr. Brailsford says, "The word that Indians were waiting to hear, the key-word 'independence,' should have been used" (*New Statesman*, May 18, 1942). But it is not a question of words. The Draft declaration could have replaced the word Dominion Status by the word independence and it would not have made a lot of difference. What is needed is a policy which puts the Indian people in charge of maintaining and defending their freedom. As the Congress resolution says, "what is most wanting is the enthusiastic response of the people, which cannot be evoked without the fullest trust in them and the devolution of responsibility on them in the matter of defence."

In spite, therefore, of Mr. Coupland's conclusion that "the communal problem, and not her relations with Britain, is India's major problem," the central point is that no new approach was made to the people of India while at the same time the hard fact remains that the defence of India is not militarily possible without winning the co-operation of the Indian people.

The Cripps mission was the last effort on the lines of the old policy. It is becoming realised that it belongs to a past period. The new period demands something more than only "the most insignificant" constitutional changes. The Viceroy's Council has been enlarged from 12 to 15 members, without the addition of a single representative of any section of popular political opinion. A defence minister has been created of whom the gibe runs in India that he will have charge of canteens and latrines for the war effort.

There is a note of complacency in recent Government pronouncements on India which is entirely at variance with the facts. The flow of recruits into the Indian Army is boosted as an outstanding achievement. Satisfaction is expressed that the war effort in India is "as good as in the last war." This is the practical realisation of the policy enunciated by Lord Halifax when he helped to torpedo the Cripps negotiations by declaring that if India's leaders rejected the opportunity offered them "we shall, I do not doubt, continue to have the co-operation and good will of millions of Indians not less devoted than the accredited leaders to the cause of Indian freedom." This attitude means ignoring the whole urgency of the problems arising from the new conditions of total war, which can only be solved by the full participation of the whole people. Instead of a new approach, the bureaucratic mind finds satisfaction in a situation where its measures for defence can be imposed from above.

But the failure to find a basis for making use of popular initiative in resisting aggression and in developing the vast potential resources of India, so that the country can play its full part in the anti-Fascist front, can only spell disaster. It is only necessary to contrast what has been achieved in China under a National

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Government to realise the colossal failure implied by a war effort in India which is only equal to that of the last war. China is recognised as an equal partner among the allied nations. United under their own government, her people have been able to display a military strength which has kept the Japanese armies at bay for five years and to achieve an unprecedented development of national resources and culture.

There is no doubt that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek spoke with a full realisation of the value of a free India not only to China, but to the world front against Fascism, when he appealed to Britain during his visit to India: "I sincerely hope and I confidently believe that Great Britain, without waiting for any demands on the part of the peoples of India, will as speedily as possible give them real political power." That message could leave no dubiety as to his attitude towards the central problem in India.

Gandhi has used the situation created by the rebuff administered to Indian aspirations to induce the Indian National Congress to adopt a policy which, in effect, dissociates it altogether from the struggle of the allied nations. Its resolution is almost wholly a pathetic appeal to Britain "to make India a willing partner in the joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and the peoples of the world," but ends by indicating that a non-violent movement of resistance to British rule led by Gandhi is the only alternative. But the Indian masses are not pacifist, nor are they indifferent to the cause for which the peoples of China and the Soviet Union, to name but two, are fighting. They are against a sterile policy which would leave them passive spectators while the fate of the world is being decided. The resolutions of working class, Trade Union and students' organisations, the demonstrations that were held on June 22, the anniversary of the outbreak of the Soviet-German war, afford unmistakable evidence of their readiness to co-operate actively in the war against Fascism.

In spite, therefore, of the resolution adopted by the Working Committee of the Congress, it becomes the more important to carry forward the campaign here to insist that India should be allowed its own government for organising its own defence, and that no section should be allowed to stand in the way of the millions in India co-operating with the free peoples of the world. It is a responsibility of the Labour movement in Britain to press the full application of the principles of the Atlantic Charter to India, the release of political prisoners,* (many thousands of whom are still in prison for their activity in the working-class, the peasant, and the anti-Fascist movement) and the recognition of a free India, under its own national government, as an ally not less important than China or the Soviet Union.

The initiative taken by the India League in this country in organising a ballot in factories and among trade unionists on the subject of a national government for India is helping to bring the issue into prominence and already shows a ten to one majority in London alone for this policy. If the former hostile policy towards the Soviet Union could be reversed, so can also the policy of hostility to Indian aspirations, and with equally important results for the united strength of the free nations.

* This article was written before the announcement (July 23) of the removal of the ban on the Communist Party of India and the release from prison of a number of its members.

NOTICE TO READERS. It is over two years since a ban was imposed on the export of the LABOUR MONTHLY. Previously a ban might be imposed on the export of a particular issue, after examination of its contents. But this general ban operates irrespective of contents, and is applied also to the pamphlets (advertised on the cover) of which the LABOUR MONTHLY is publisher. Readers should take up this question with Members of Parliament and in other ways.

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Food and Strategy

"by PLOUGHMAN"

JUST as in industry, there are unused reserves in British Agriculture. Farmers, scientists, farm workers—all testify how much more could be produced. The seriousness of the situation is not a matter of the people's diet, important though that is. It is the waste of shipping now carrying food, shipping which is needed for the transport of arms and armies, and for the opening of the Second Front in Europe in 1942.

When the Duke of Norfolk, Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, appealed to farmers early this year for a 5 per cent. increase in the 1942 harvest, which, he said, would save 1¼ million tons of shipping, everyone in touch with the industry knew that a very much larger increase was possible. Agriculture can increase our capacity to strike at Hitler at points of our own choosing, as well as to sustain our armies abroad and supply the Red Army.

The proposals which the Communist Party makes in its *Memorandum on Agriculture* are of vital importance to the nation as a whole, and it is significant that they come from a political party overwhelmingly industrial in composition. The lack of contact between the industrial and country workers has been for many years a major source of weakness in the working-class movement in this country, which the ruling class has been at pains to increase.*

The difficulties come up earlier than in industry. There is not much argument about the kind of products wanted from factories; motor-cars and gramophones have to give place to tanks and aeroplanes. But in Agriculture there is an argument, and a highly technical one, as to the kinds of food which it is best to produce. Land can produce either food for direct human consumption, such as wheat, potatoes and vegetables; or it can be used as pasture or for fodder crops (mangles, oats, etc.) to support animals which provide milk, meat and eggs. Land under arable crops produces many times the food-value obtained from the animals it could support. The following table from Sir Thomas Middleton's book, *Food Policy and War Time* (1924) is a rough but very striking illustration.

	Persons maintained per 100 acres
Potatoes	418
Wheat	208
Average pasture for milk ...	41
Average pasture for meat ...	9

Since 1870 arable acreage has declined and permanent pasture has increased; more and more grain, both for human consumption and for fodder, has been imported. What is needed, therefore, to save shipping is the maximum possible change over from livestock to arable production. There are qualifications; the rotation of crops necessitates the production of some fodder crops on arable land; and the maintenance, or even increase, of milk-production is urgently desirable from the point of view of the nation's health, but, in general, putting British Agriculture on a wartime basis means an increase in arable acreage, at the expense, to some extent, of livestock. This has been the basis of the Government's policy of compulsory plough-up of old grass land, and the reduction of the numbers of pigs and poultry.

The memorandum examines the extent to which this policy has geen applied. In view of the fact that the six million acres ploughed up during the war have resulted in an arable acreage no larger than in 1872, in spite of the mechanisation of agriculture and tremendous advances in technique, it concludes that this has not gone far enough. *It proposes an extension of the plough-up in* 1942-3 *of two million acres, in place of the half million acres recently announced by the Government, and a further two million in* 1943-4.

Convincing reasons are given why the plough-up has been approached so hesitantly and half-heartedly. The decline of British Agriculture and the loss of arable land since 1872 resulted from the import basis of British economy. Agriculture was artificially directed towards livestock and market-garden production, which would compete least with imports, so that the

* As recently as November, 1941, Mr. Hudson, the Minister of Agriculture, in a speech at Newcastle, said "The demand of the town workers for cheap food had made it impossible for the farm labourers to earn a decent wage."

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livestock farm, using imported fodder and with little or no arable, became typical in many counties. In war-time, the importing interests are still powerful, especially in the Ministry of Food. Like their industrial brethren, they have an eye to their post-war interests and so tend to resist a decisive change in the basis of British Agriculture. Powerful sections of the farmers, who have become powerful by successfully adapting themselves to a livestock basis, especially beef production, also resist such a change, being unconvinced that they will be able to carry on in the new way once the war is over, and fearing the loss of all they have put into their farms on the present basis.

The reasons given by the Government for calling a halt were shortage of labour, machinery and fertilisers. The key to meet labour shortage is the extended employment of women. If, as the Prime Minister has said, industry has a "first reserve" of 12½ million married women, it surely should be possible to increase many times over the miserable figure of 40,700 which the Women's Land Army claimed at the end of June: and the memorandum makes detailed proposals as to how to meet the lack of labour. The shortage of fertilisers is met by the suggestion that the rationing of existing supplies so that they go strictly to those soils and crops which need them most would prove adequate.

The number of tractors has increased during the war from 50,000 to 120,000. These, if fully used, are more than sufficient for the suggested extension of the plough-up. Suggestions are made for pooling machinery, and these are linked with the whole question of co-operation among small farmers. A majority of our farmers are small. Fifty-four per cent. of holdings in Great Britain vary between 5 and 50 acres, and one of the most urgent, as well as the most difficult, questions in increasing production is to make machinery and modern methods available to small farmers.

To ensure the best use of the land, the Memorandum calls for the control of all crops and of the numbers of livestock on all farms.

Such control would lead to :—

possibilities of competition, rivalry, and emulation in fulfilment of quotas, which can have a tremendous effect in stimulating production. A common-place in the Soviet Union, no one until recently seems to have dreamed of applying such a conception to British Agriculture.

Finally there must be unified control at the top.

A single Minister with a place in the War Cabinet must be appointed responsible for all aspects of food policy. He must co-ordinate the activities of the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, and give the continuous attention to all problems which are indispensable.

The Communist Party, which has been very prominent in advocating Production Committees in industry to enable the workers to play a part in planning and organising for increased production, is therefore particularly well qualified for handling all questions relating to the organising of personnel for increased production.

The execution of the Government's measures in the various counties is in the hands of the War Agricultural Executive Committees, who have very wide powers. These, says the memorandum :—

Were appointed—none quite knows how. An analysis of 14 W.A.E.C.s which we have made reveals the following social composition : 13 landowners; 6 land agents; 44 big farmers; 9 medium or small farmers; 14 workers' representatives; 1 scientist; 13 women (8 with titles); 7 miscellaneous.

Of 47 women originally appointed 25 had titles. In effect, the execution of all war-time measures has been put in the hands of the landowning, big-farmer class.

The very moderate suggestion is made that these Committees should be strengthened by the addition of representatives of the agricultural workers and farmers, including the small farmers, and responsible to those they represent. This would provide a much closer and more living connection between the committees and those whom they are controlling and organising, and give the Committees a much more intimate knowledge of the problems they must help to solve.

At the same time Production Committees resembling those in factories must be established throughout the industry. One War Agricultural Executive Committee (Hertfordshire) has already set up such committees for its own employees, and as the W.A.E.C.s are by far the largest employers of agricultural labour in most counties, it is clearly with them that the movement must start. There must be a wide and rapid adoption

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of the methods and experience of Hertfordshire. But the more difficult problem of covering the ordinary farms and their employees must not be shirked, and Production Committees representing all farmers and agricultural workers must be the aim based on villages, parishes, or other convenient groups of farms. The agricultural workers have the skill and the knowledge; they can make a vast and hitherto unasked-for contribution to our war effort. The democratised W.A.E.C.s would find Joint Production Committees of the greatest assistance in solving the innumerable local problems, the workers would gain enormously in organisation and prestige.

The question of the future of agriculture is far more fundamental than for any other industry:—

> Undoubtedly the collapse of agriculture after the last war has left very bitter memories with farmers and farm workers. Farmers' spokesmen have made statements of which the implication is that they cannot be expected to make efforts and take risks now because they were let down so badly last time. . . . Confidence in the future cannot fail to have a beneficial effect on production now, and agriculture must have an important and assured place in post-war reconstruction.

The broad outline of future development is indicated. Agriculture in this country need never fall back into the sorry plight in which it has been since the last war, losing its skilled workers, reducing its arable acreage, and bankrupting its farmers. The increased arable acreage can be maintained and the wider adoption of ley-farming methods will result in a balanced agriculture with plenty of room for all kinds of live-stock as well. Labour and machinery will be available for large schemes of land reclamation; and, fulfilling the needs of the masses of the people for an ever-improving diet, the industry will need more labour, management and technical resources than it has ever done before.

The vested interests who have to be fought in order to put the industry on a war-time basis will have to be fought in order to restore it to peace-time prosperity, but it is in the interests of the whole people, industrial workers, farm workers, and the vast majority of farmers, that they should be fought and beaten. The struggle will be easier to the extent that we succeed now in mobilising the full resources of the industry for winning the war.

To save ships, to feed our people, to strike at Hitler, to lay the basis for a prosperous countryside, all alike demand that we face up to the question. It must not be left to the farmers and the farm workers, it is the job of the whole nation, and as always, the working-class movement has the biggest share of the responsibility. It must study the essentials of the problem; it must exert its strength to see that it is trifled with no longer.

CORRECTION. In July issue, page 218, the reference to H. A. L. Fisher as Education Minister should be under a " Coalition Government."

BOUND VOLUMES, 1942

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Book Reviews

Conditions of Peace

PROFESSOR CARR is the author of two well-known works on foreign policy since 1919, both distinguished by their pessimistic view of the prospects of international peace. He is widely read on the subject, he is not afraid to break accepted conventions, and he has a lively style. In his new book* Carr makes the first attempt since 1939 to base suggestions for preserving peace after the end of the present war upon an analysis of mistakes in home and foreign policy before its outbreak. In this he differs from most other writers on the subject, who take moral considerations or generous aspirations as their point of departure.

Professor Carr is one of a number of experienced and well-read Civil Servants—he has worked for years in the Foreign Office—who have begun to tackle the problem of how to save the world for capitalism, and particularly of how to ensure the maximum of influence for British Imperialism, after the present war. The interest of their work lies not so much in the particular schemes thhey propose for organising the post-war world—the correlation of forces, at the moment of victory, will determine that—as precisely in the degree to which they are prepared critically to analyse international policy to-day, and particularly the policy which they know best—that of Great Britain. At first sight Carr's book promises well, his first part—the survey of European affairs as they stood in 1939—begins with a chapter proclaiming that the present war is part of a revolution. In four following chapters, Carr analyses what he calls the "crisis of democracy," the "crisis of self-determination," the economic crisis and the moral crisis. In his second part—outline of suggestions for the post-war world—Carr deals in successive chapters with Britain's home policy, her relations with the world, Europe and Germany respectively, and methods of organising European life.

It might be expected that, even if one did not fully agree with his views and conclusions, Carr's book would be helpful in clearing away some of the dead wood of misinformation and misconceptions, and thus lighting up at least part of the way ahead Unfortunately, this is not the case. Carr's book leaves the reader in as great a fog as ever. This is due above all to its eclectic character—that is, Professor Carr's method of borrowing conclusions freely from different schools of thought on capitalistic society and the pre-war world, without bothering whether those conclusions are drawn from principles or assumptions totally at variance with, or opposed to, one another.

Carr borrows freely from Marxist-Leninist criticism of the capitalist system, but in doing so thinks he can reject the foundations of that criticism, and often "adapts" the criticism itself to suit the respectable ear. He criticises British policy in general, but invariably justifies it in all essentials when he comes down to detail. On the other hand, he praises the Soviet Union in occasional details, while grotesquely misrepresenting its fundamental characteristics. Again and again, while talking of a revolution already in progress, and denouncing an economic and political system based on private profit making, he makes it clear elsewhere that he is accepting the main principles of capitalism.

What but confusion and a sense of impotence can the ordinary man and woman draw from such a method?

What are we to make, for example, of an analysis of the capitalist world which begins with the announcement that the pre-1914 civilised world "was on the whole a prosperous and orderly world . . .a world of contented and reasoned optimism," and that after 1918, the war-weary peoples "sank into a mood of comfortable resignation" (pp. ix-x)—yet admits later that the 1914-1918 war itself was already a symptom of "a major crisis going to the deepest roots of our civilisation" (p. 5), and that one of its most important underlying causes was "the increasing strains of competitive capitalism (p. 7)? Again, in his analysis of democracy Carr will at one moment assert (in extraordinary defiance of the history of the XVIII and XIX centuries) that the period since 1920 is the first time at which "organised economic power" has become "the dominant factor in politics" (p. 21), and explain that this refers to the powers of organised capital and organised labour, supposedly dominant at the expense of the " rest of the community" (pp. 24-25). Yet, a few pages further on, he will cheerfully proclaim (p. 35) that equality of political rights makes little difference to the individual "in face of a social and economic inequality which is an ever-present factor in his ordinary affairs." That is, Carr borrows from Marxism-Leninism a criticism totally incompatible with the hackneyed Tory-Liberal claptrap of the "domination" of "organised capital and labour" over the "rest of the community."

It is not surprising, therefore, that his final proposals for meeting British and world economic problems—public works and housing schemes (p. 134), a minimum standard of living (pp. 135-6), national economic planning (pp. 137-8, 144-5), and the formation of various European economic corporations and planning bodies (pp. 251-255)—like all similar schemes, beg the whole question. They ignore the domination of capitalist society by the great monopolies (on the contrary, Carr devotes much space to variations on the theme that the world has already "abandoned the hypothesis of the pursuit of individual interests as the motive force of the economic system"!) His schemes would amount in practice, consequently, to the creation of gigantic national and European super-trusts and super-cartels, "planning" the lives of hundreds of millions—and their deaths too, when the struggles of the various monopolies, intermingled with those of the few great imperialist Powers whom they influence, resulted in yet a third World War.

* E. H. Carr *Conditions of Peace* (Macmillan, 1942 pp. xxiv+275. 12s6d.)

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For this is the grim prospect which emerges from Carr's picture of the future—not merely as it looks to-day, but as he would like to see it organised.

His criticism of the Versailles settlement after the last war reduces itself (pp. 46-47) to a criticism of its creation of several new independent small States. He exposes the illusion of their neutrality, and lays stress on their utter dependence on a few Great Powers (pp. 55, 62, 181)—not in order to criticise the imperialist system, but in order to insist that the sovereignty and frontiers of the small powers should not necessarily be restored (pp. 237, 241). On the other hand, Carr has no doubts whatever about the frontiers of the British Empire and the United States and as for their sovereignty, self-determination does not apply to India, because of the "diversity created by different races and religions" (p. 65).

Furthermore, throughout the book there runs a scarcely-disguised apology for the disastrous British foreign policy of the period 1924-1939. This aimed first, under Austen Chamberlain, at urging Weimar Germany to become the spearhead of a European drive against the U.S.S.R. (from Locarno in 1925 to the rupture over the Metro-Vickers trial in 1933, with a brief interval during the Labour Government), and then, under Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain, built up the national and international power of Hitler, with the object of setting Nazi Germany itself on to the U.S.S.R. In the course of this policy, international antagonisms were pushed up to exploding point, German Fascism armed itself to the teeth, and a number of valuable advanced bastions were sacrificed (the Spanish Republic, Eastern China, Austria, Czechoslovakia). No attempt to sketch reliable foundations for future international policy is of the least value unless it fearlessly opens up this ulcer: that was the value of books like Cecil's *A Great Experiment*, Dell's *The Geneva Racket* and Schuman's *Night over Europe*.

But there is none of this in Carr's book. In its search for other explanations of the failure of pre-1939 British diplomacy, it becomes objectively an apologia for imperialism—which, of course, is to be expected from its earlier peculiarities. It finds every reason for the collapse of collective security except the obvious one (pp. 52, 169-171): so also for the League of Nations (p. 192): and, while exposing the Vansittart theory of the "natural wickedness" of the German race, it covers up the real reason (Anglo-French influence) for the stopping and suppression of mass revolt in Germany after 1918 (pp. 225-6). As a result, Carr can seriously propose that "restoring and maintaining order" in Western Germany can be entrusted to the existing British army, with possibly some Dominion or American reinforcements: a course which, unless there were changes in Britain that Carr himself is very much against, would mean that Germany would once more be made safe for the landowners and Big Business, *i.e.*, for a new imperialist war.

Misrepresentation of the Soviet Union in all but secondary details always goes hand-in-hand with such a train of thought as Carr's. It was a "dissatisfied Power," like Germany or Japan (p. xx). Hitler succeeded where Lenin failed (p. 9). Soviet planning against crises is not "instructive," because the possibility of overproduction scarcely existed (p. 94) in such a primitive stage of economic development (Carr forgets that Tsarist Russia was visited by crises as much as any other capitalist State). The Soviet Union engaged in colonial wars of the nineteenth century type during the last twenty years (p. 114); and so forth. It is remarkable, in the circumstances, that Professor Carr concedes to the U.S.S.R. a certain voice in the future ordering of affairs in Eastern Germany (p. 227), and advises the small states of Eastern Europe to consult with the U.S.S.R. (pp. 197-8). But there is nowhere any suggestion of real Anglo-Soviet collaboration as the basis of European settlement. It is no defence to say that Carr wrote before the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of May 26: that only shows up the essentially eclectic character of his work.

It will be seen, then, that Professor Carr's book does not advance the cause of international collaboration very much, even by a preliminary working-over of the ground. One may venture to suggest that that is likely to be the fate of any such work which does not start from a really unsparing critique of the capitalist international order before 1939—one, that is, which is as little tender of British imperialist susceptibilities as of any other.

But more must be said. No one could possibly accuse Professor Carr of being a Fascist; but his Utopia of a super-imperialist, "planned" world in which big trusts and the Labour movement, European investments and European reconstruction, go hand-in-hand, may be very easily used as the propaganda material of Fascism. His suggestions for "the new faith" (pp. 118-125) come dangerously near all the stock-in-trade of Fascist "ideology" produced since 1922.

QUÆSTOR.

China the Unconquerable

CHINA HAS unquestionably earned the undying gratitude of all democratic and anti-Fascist peoples throughout the world. The pamphlet by Arthur Clegg, published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, is a tribute called forth by the strength, courage and resolution of the Chinese people, who not only held the Japanese aggressor in check for five years, but helped the British forces in a new front in Burma.

China's resistance has entered now its sixth year and the history of this heroic stand has potent lessons for the people of this country. Arthur Clegg traces this history from the period prior to 1937, showing how National Unity was established. Two quotations given show the basis of this National Unity:—

"We need more national unity to increase our strength of resistance. A lasting and powerful

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unity must be based upon the welfare of the whole nation and all the people."

—(Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, October 10, 1941.)

"Unity in the ranks of the Chinese people is the starting-point for victory over Japan. . . . The Communist Party, which initiated it, will continue to strengthen this unity."

—(Mao Tse-tung, October 10, 1941.)

The National Front was formed of all parties, of all classes—of peasants, of workers, of capitalists, of landlords, and of all peoples of China. The Communist Party of China pledged whole-hearted co-operation with the Kuomingtang for national salvation. A People's Political Council was set up by the Government representative of all parties and in this new form became the Supreme National Defence Council. This unity helped the Chinese peoples to overcome immense difficulties, and as Arthur Clegg says, "Half armed, they owe their victories to the strength, courage and resolution of the people. . . ."

They built the 800 miles Burma Road, 1,600 miles of the Sinkiang Road and another 600 miles of the new road into India through Tibet. Guerilla warfare is continuously carried on deep behind the Japanese lines. During all this period of fighting entirely new industries have been established, and a new China is being born out of the struggle.

The people of Britain owe a tremendous debt to China.

The pamphlet shows that the magnificent fight that China has put up has inspired all oppressed peoples, particularly India, and concludes with the following call:—

"We dare not ignore the voice and appeals of China about the treatment of Eastern peoples. We must give India the right to take her place proudly beside that of China as an equal in the ranks of the Allies. We must see that China gets the arms, the planes she needs. For when China gets the arms her mighty armies will bring the power of Imperial Japan toppling down. We pledge to China that we will learn from her sacrifices, determination and offensive spirit. We will smash Hitler in 1942."

On June 22, remembering their heroism, their sacrifices, their daring titanic victories, we saluted, as we salute each day, our Soviet Allies.

On July 7, remembering their five-year long resistance, we salute, as we should each day, our Chinese Allies.

Together, drawing always nearer, let us go forward boldly, and yet more boldly, until victory is won.

BEN BRADLEY.

A Study of Birmingham

When We Build Again—A study based on research into conditions of living and working in Birmingham. A Bournville Village Trust Research Publication. With a foreword by Lord Balfour of Burleigh. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. London 1941. 138 pages. Price 8s6d. With numerous photographs and maps.)

THIS IS A MOST useful publication because it puts one of the most important post-war problems in simple language and yet with all its complications before us. The first part, "History," briefly shows the development of housing conditions in Birmingham. It is surprising to read that in the "Old City" in 1913 "most of the dwelling houses . . . were unfit for habitation, even judged by the very low standards of working-class housing of that time. . . . This meant that over a quarter of a million people lived in cavernous conditions" (p. 16). But it is even more surprising to read (pp. 31, 32) that by 1935 "Here and there a few slum-houses had been demolished, but the great mass of them remained—and had deteriorated even further. . . . So far as overcrowding itself was concerned the position had also grown more serious."

One of the most interesting chapters of the book is "The Journey to Work." It shows that less than half of the workers live in the same district in which they work, that about a quarter of all workers have to travel three or more miles ("as the crow flies," that is actually more) to their working place, and that more than one-third of all workers spend 2s. per week or more in travelling to and from work. If we remember that the official cost-of-living index of the Ministry of Labour assumes that the worker does not need to spend any money on travelling, the importance of this investigation becomes all the greater.

All those who want to help—after victory has been achieved—not only to build again, but to build better, must study this book.

J. K.

Publications Received

Ships (Report of April 5 Conference) (Engineer's Shop Stewards National Council, 3d, 32 pp.).
On Organisation, by J. V. Stalin (Lawrence & Wishart, 6d, 32 pp.).
Approach to Social Security, by I.L.O. (P. S. King, 2s, 100 pp.).
A Short History of International Affairs, by G. M. Gathorne-Hardy (Oxford University Press, 12s6d, 514 pp.).
Soviet Trade Unions (Lawrence & Wishart, 6d, 26 pp.).
War in the Workshops by Jack Owen (Lawrence & Wishart, 1s3d, 72 pp.).
German Industry on the Warpath, 1860-1939 by B. Menne (Hutchinson, 1s, 64 pp.).
The Cripps Mission by R. Coupland (Oxford University Press, 1s, 64 pp.).
India and Freedom by L. S. Amery, M.P. (Oxford University Press, 3s6d, 122 pp.).
Health and the War Worker (Labour Research Department, 6d, 40 pp.).
Broadcasting for Democracy by O. Friedmann (Allen & Unwin, 2s6d, 62 pp.).

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From letters to the LABOUR MONTHLY DEVELOPMENT FUND we extract these remarks: "*In this area we hold L.M. regularly as one to a part of the most important L.* [illegible] *and I am sure we could do as soldiers do—work ahead*" and "*L.M. . . . is of great value to us. It helps to guide us and to stimulate discussions, as we often do in the Army.*" Work as soldiers do—work ahead—build more and more and more Discussion Groups! Conditions are so much easier for civilians. Build more and more groups.

LABOUR MONTHLY DISCUSSION GROUPS

Places in **BOLD TYPE** are new Groups. Places in *italics* are projected Groups.

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HOME COUNTIES

Aldershot, Amersham, Ashford (Kent), Ashford (Middx.), Aylesbury, Barnet, near Colchester, Banstead, Beaconsfield, Bishop's Stortford, Brancaster, Brentwood, Burnham, Cliff, Bridge, Bush Hill Park, Canterbury, Caterham, Chesham, Chelmsford, Chingford, Clacton, Coggeshall, Colchester, Crayford, Crowborough, Dartford, Deal, Dorking, Eastbourne, Eastchurch, Edenbridge, Epping, Epsom, Ewell, Faversham, Felixstowe, Folkestone, Gillingham, Godalming, Gravesend, Grays, Guildford, Hadleigh, Harlow, Hastings, Hatfield, Hayes, Hemel Hempstead, Herne Bay, Hertford, Hitchin, Horndean, Horsham, Hythe, Ilford, Kenton, Letchworth, Maidenhead, Maidstone, Margate, Newbury, Newhaven, Orpington, Pinner, Ripley, Rochester, Romford, Ruislip, Rye, Saffron Walden, Sandwich, Sevenoaks, Shepperton, Slough, Staines, Sunbury-on-Thames, Swanscombe, Tenterden, Tilbury, Tonbridge, Uxbridge, Wallington, Waltham Cross, Watford, Welling, Welwyn, WICKFORD, Windsor and Eton, Woodford.

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